



by Benjamin J. Stein

I Was Robbed

Here I am in Little Rock, Arkansas. I am here with my wifie and son, the angels Alex and Tommy, and my wife's nephew, Matt, to visit my father-in-law, Col. Denman, his wife, Sue, and their families in Little Rock, and to watch an Arkansas-Mississippi State football game.

I had been in New York and met Alex and Tommy at the airport. They had come in from L.A. We rented a huge van and loaded in our luggage. *Hint:* Why can't the rental car companies ask their lot men, who are often just lounging about gossiping, to help us customers with our luggage? It's just a thought.

Then, off to the Capital Hotel, an old, beautifully renovated structure in the little town that is Little Rock. What a struggle to get checked in! It seemed to be just plain beyond the ability of the desk clerks to figure out how to bill three rooms to one credit card. Small wonder Clinton had so much success with local women. Finally, we got in, met Col. Denman, and had a lavish dinner.

Tommy ran into the kitchen to watch his venison getting prepared. This is the least squeamish kid on earth. He would make a fine surgeon. A grinning, cheery black chef posed for Tommy with his chef's hat. Our waiter put up with all of Tommy's rudeness and demands pleasantly. I spend much of the dinners with him yelling at him to be more polite to the waiters and waitresses, but it does little good. I think a summer job as a waiter might change that. Waiting tables has to be one of the most horrible, painful, thankless jobs there is.

BENJAMIN J. STEIN is a writer, actor, economist, and lawyer living in Hollywood and Malibu.

Friday

Sort of the mirror opposite of the "job" of serving as Prince Tommy Stein.

Still, later on, after Alex had fallen asleep, Tommy and I stayed up and watched a scary movie. He was delicious company. When he feels like talking, he is about as amusing and interesting as anyone I know. I just wish he felt like talking a bit more.

I am determined not to be a constant nag to him, though. He is so sweet, so likable, has so much enthusiasm, that I do not want to be the black cloud hanging over him. I'll let my wife be that.

Saturday

Wooo Pig, Sooey. Yes, that's the Arkansas Razorback Hogs' cheer.

I, your servant, am in the crowd at the UALR stadium shouting it. Our seats, alas, are right next to the Mississippi State band, which really knows how to make noise. It's bitterly cold. And legions of people are coming over for autographs. Frankly, I like signing autographs. It tells me I have fans, and that therefore I might be able to pay my mortgage for another month. Men, women, kids, everyone wanted an autograph. I signed and signed, and then every so often went for a walk to the much better seats that my wife and mother-in-law were in. In his usual genteel way, Col. Denman had put us men next to the noisy band and given the women, who could hardly have cared less about the game, the good seats.

Still, I enjoyed the game a lot. In my mind, I am always thinking that I could be getting shot in an alley in Wroclaw by the SS, getting killed by overwork at a Stalinist Gulag, getting drowned in a well by Cosacks in a pogrom, or getting shot and gassed in a World War I trench. Or, I could be in a cancer ward. But instead, by the grace of God almighty, Lord of Hosts, I am watching a football game among the friendliest

people on earth, Americans, and especially Southern Americans, and getting asked for autographs.

The blessing of being an American in 1999 is always on my mind. The way we—Jews, gentiles, whites, blacks, Hispanics, Asians, men, women, children—live in this country is beyond belief. Nothing in human history even comes close.

Heavy emphasis here: This is true very much in the South. The old South, with its sad history of frustration and anger and racism, is as far gone as the empire of Caligula. Modern Southern America has all the friendliness of the old South, only now it's to everyone, with the openness and opportunity of booming 1999 America. If I lose my show and retire, I think I'll move to Eden Isle, Arkansas, where the living is really, really easy and pleasant, and where I can live without getting into the spending vise I am now in.

Anyway, Wooo Pig, Sooey. The Razorbacks won, and it was a great game, and I am so glad I live where I do when I do.

Thursday

This is something completely different. I am back at my show. We have started taping it again. Good Lord, it's hard work. Still, I am enjoying it. I have a great group of people around me: Al Burton, my best pal, executive producer and inventor of the show; Andrew Golder, who really runs the show, and is a genius; Meredith Fox, exec in charge; Terry, the question man; Yaniv, my bodyguard; Susie, my makeup woman; Bones, the stage manager; Dennis, the director; a new, unobtrusive sound man named Mike, which is sort of funny, since his job is to mike me, and everyone else.

I've been doing the show for three days now and have not lost any games. I love

that a lot but it's going to be a problem because, you see, the point of the show is for other people to beat me, the old professor. If I win each time, the show suffers.

Still, I can count on getting sick and tired and starting to lose. I am not a strong person, and I get colds and flu and colitis readily.

But when I leave the set after winning all the games, I do feel great.

Lately, I feel especially great because Cadillac has loaned me a new Deville DTS car. It rides like a dream, has lots of power, and most of all, has night vision. *C'est vrai*. Night vision. It has a lens in the grille and somehow some mechanism greatly enhances the light ahead of the car so I can see in the dark. There is a little "heads up" display right on the windshield, and I can see about a quarter mile, maybe a little more, ahead of me. I see coyotes and people crossing the street illegally, cars parked with no lights. It's amazing.

I have no idea how much it costs, but I do plan to get one. It's a space-age safety feature I need.

Saturday
Disaster. A devastating flu. I started to feel sick last night, by which I mean I felt very tired and depressed. When I start to feel sick, I feel suicidally depressed. I lie in bed and think, over and over again, "You are a loser. Your whole life is a failure. Why do you waste space and air and water when you do not even deserve to be alive?"

I felt that way so strongly that I started to think about guns last night, which is always a bad sign.

Then, this morning, I felt shaky and tired. I did a little filing and cleaning, and then, about dinner time, I took a nap. I awakened with uncontrollable shakes and shivering and a high fever. My head throbbed. Sweat poured off me. I felt desperate. As if I were about to die in moments. I called Alex into my room. "I just want to tell you where all our important financial papers are," I said. "They're downstairs at the beach. In a file marked 'Financial 99.' I have two life insurance policies, too. One with MONY and one with Northwestern Mutual."

Before I could go on, my wife sensibly suggested that I cut the maudlin talk and

“
***The profit system is
the most powerful
incentive machine ever
for human creativity.***
”

use my breath to call our doctor and get some medicine.

"But there's nothing for the flu," I said.

"Well, just call him," she said.

Instead, I lay in bed for hours feeling as if I would die. Then I took a shower feeling as if I would die. Then I called Dr. Grodan, one of my many doctors. "In fact," he said, "there is something for flu. It's an inhalable anti-viral. Brand new. It's very expensive."

WHO CARES, IF IT GETS ME WELL?

Alex generously rushed out to an all-night pharmacy. She came back soon thereafter with a mysterious little package of inhaler and capsules under the odd name Relenza. I read the warning sheet. Mostly it said the medicine might upset my stomach. Who cares? My stomach is upset all the time anyway.

I took the medicine in the strange inhalant way it's prescribed. Wham, a few moments later, my stomach was indeed upset. But in an hour, I felt distinctly better. Still later, I took another couple of whiffs. Bang, another stomach upset, but then I felt still better.

Can this be a true miracle drug?

Sunday
It can be and it is. I awakened this morning feeling as if I would not die. After another couple of puffs and a few more bouts with my stomach, I felt still better. This stuff is incredible. Now, I thought, the drug company that makes this must have spent billions creating it. Complex genetically engineered designer drugs that can stop a deadly virus? That can't be cheap. How many blind alleys did the drug company have to go down to get this great stuff? I think I'm unbelievably lucky to be able to

defeat this flu, and this medicine does it for me for the price of a decent lunch.

What if the Clintonistas had price controls in effect for drugs? Would the drug companies feel motivated to spend a fortune to produce these drugs and make them work right? What if these companies decided that they wouldn't make enough money under price controls to make a profit on Relenza? I'd still be feeling as if I were about to die. I might be dying. Maybe Alex would be looking for my insurance policy right now.

I want the drug companies to feel as if they're going to make trillions on drugs that save lives and make people healthier. Frankly, health is so vital that if a Schering Plough or a Squibb makes a profit of hundreds of percent on every pill or shot or inhalation, and if it has to make that money to offset losses on drugs that never work, fine with me.

The profit system is the most powerful incentive machine there has ever been for human creativity. Why not harness it to prolong and enhance life? Why just throw it away in favor of Bolshevism? What great drugs have come out of socialized medicine? It's no accident that all the great drugs come because drug makers think they can make fortunes in the U.S. market. It's not a coincidence that we have access to the best drugs. Profit makes it happen.

If Bill Clinton and Hillary want price controls, let them put price controls on contributions to the Democratic Party.

Thursday
Uh-oh. I don't like this. I worked all week on my show, and worked hard. Having to answer those questions is difficult work at best, and when I lose, it's impossibly trying. Anyway, I worked like a madman all week, and then last night I went downtown to the Biltmore Hotel next to Pershing Square to sleep. The plan was to put me up a few blocks from the L.A. Convention Center, where next day I would moderate an 8 a.m. panel meeting at the Western Cable Show on the future of cable and Internet convergence. It features a man from Yahoo—a multi-billionaire from Yahoo—John Malone, founder of TCI and also a billionaire, and little me, who trembles at his MasterCard bill. They expect an audience of 4,000.

The problem is that my room at the Biltmore is a huge, dusty hellhole. Room service was a joke, and there was no place to plug in my laptop. I started to feel very sick through the night, and by the morning I was feeling awful.

The flu is coming back, and it's my fault for getting exhausted.

I did my panel fine. I am getting to be very fond of Dr. Malone. He and I quarreled sharply last year when I questioned why his TCI never made any profits and how it could be valued if it had no earnings. This year he's mellow and even humorous. I spent most of the panel asking about how the valuations of high-tech companies were ever going to mesh with the earnings. How could a company selling at \$500 (say, Yahoo), with earnings of a few pennies per share, justify such a price? How many centuries would it take for earnings to be, say, \$25 a share, so Yahoo sold at a sane twenty times earnings? (Even that's a high ratio.)

The gent from Yahoo gave such funny answers I wish he could be a writer on our show. The problem is that he thought his answers were serious. He said that Yahoo would make money very fast by getting paid infinitesimal fractions of a cent for searches and fees for ordering compact discs and movies. I may be wrong, but it seems to me that Yahoo would not make enough money to justify its share price if it sold every disc and every movie ever made—and if it got to keep all the money from the sale, not just the pennies for the routing.

By the time the session was done, I was too. The audience loves me because I ask the hard questions, if I may say so. But I felt just as tired as can be.

Then, troubles at my show. The computers are not working. That caused a long, welcome delay. Then we did the show, and had a question about what the initials GMT stand for.

I said "Greenwich Mean Time," pronouncing it "Gren-tich," as people do. The judges said that was wrong, that it has to be Green-which or else Gren-Itch, with no T sound. Or that I made too much of a T sound. But I've been to Greenwich, UK, and that's how it's pronounced.

I was so angry I kicked over the safe where we keep our fake money for our winners. Imagine the judges saying I put in too

“
*When I feel that low,
it's a bad omen. It's
my ESP telling me
trouble lies ahead.*
”

much of a T sound when that's how it's commonly pronounced. Is it wrong to pronounce a place name the way the people in the place pronounce it?

By then I felt deathly ill, the computers still did not work, and I went home.

I lay in bed sweating, feeling feverish, cheated, frustrated, lost. I don't like feeling this way.

Tuesday
This is better. I'm in a giant Winnebago motor home racing up the 101 between Ventura and Santa Barbara. I'm playing the guitar. Well, really I'm just hitting the strings of the guitar. Along with the crude sounds I'm singing a song that I'm making up as I go along. The song is about e*trade, a huge on-line brokerage and financial services company for whom I am currently doing a commercial and an infomercial.

As I'm singing and "playing" the guitar, I'm being filmed, others in the Winnebago are appreciating me, and I'm getting paid. This is how life 'sposze to be.

A few days ago, when I relapsed, I thought I was done for—once again. But I took yet another wonder drug, this one called TamiFlu, and it worked spectacularly. It did have a powerful side effect of nausea, but once that passed, whaam, I was rocking and rolling in the free world. Doing this infomercial is a lot like doing a movie. There's a crew and cast and we're all together for a while. The people supervising from e*trade are jolly and hard working and cheery even at the crack of dawn. I guess they're on the cutting edge of the New Economy, and that makes them happy.

Anyway, we got to Santa Barbara, home of Wlady Pleszczynski, walked around the

wacky Farmer's Market, and asked people about trading on line. I was filmed as I did. I like being on camera a lot. I like feeling as if I'm recovering from my flu at last. Things are looking up. The sky on the way back was a rich blue. Waves crashed all over the spectacular immense towering rocks south of Point Mugu. Spray washed thirty feet in the air. At my home in Malibu, the bed beckoned. I got in with a stuffed dog, looked at the sky, and soon I was in dreamland. This is living.

Wednesday
Another evil day, starting with a long, long day on the set. We have had a major crisis. Jimmy Kimmel is leaving the show. His career has taken off in a big way with the success of "The Man Show." He is doing commercials and has a Fox Sports gig. So he rightly feels that he should not have to be overwhelmed with working on "Win Ben Stein's Money" when he could work on his own efforts. Plus, last season he had to work on the quiz show and "The Man Show" simultaneously. It was extremely stressful, and he does not want a repeat of that stress. Jimmy was a spectacularly good—not good, great—co-host. A genius of comedy in his own realm, far beyond anyone else I have ever seen. Confident, sometimes subtle, sometimes crude, as quick as lightning, always helpful, always supportive. I owe him a lot, and when he decided he had to leave, I hardly fought him at all.

I felt devastated. He has done so much for my career and my state of mind I can barely express it, and I wish him nothing but success.

The problem is that we now have to replace him and that will not be easy. We are auditioning comedians and actors and wits every day. Some are good. Some are flat. But today we stayed late and did not one but two run-throughs with potential co-hosts. After a four-show day, I was exhausted, drained, despairing. Where will we ever find a replacement for Jimmy?

Then, back to my office to file for a while, and then into Beverly Hills, almost nine o'clock, feeling so wiped out I can barely keep my eyes open. When I get home I am going straight to bed. I don't think I have ever felt so tired. It dawned on me as I felt that way—but only dawned on

ne for an instant—that when I feel that
ow, it's a bad omen. It's my ESP telling me
rouble lies ahead.

But I let that thought out of my mind
nd pulled into our new garage, the one
hat's taken a year to build and still has no
loors. As I pulled in, a motion sensor light
licked on and I stopped the car and got
out. I walked around to the passenger side
of the car and started to reach in for my
heavy briefcase.

As I did, two young men walked into
he garage quietly and self-confidently. They
were of short stature, one Hispanic, one
Anglo, wearing cotton shirts and cotton
rousers. They walked so confidently that I
hought maybe they were workmen who
ad stayed late to ask me a question. Or
else grown kids in the neighborhood, per-
haps coming over for an autograph or to
tell me how much they liked my show.

One of the men, the Hispanic, pro-
duced a huge automatic pistol, truly
mmense, and pointed it at me and then
pointed it to the side.

"Don't look at us," he said. "Look down.
Give me your money."

I didn't hesitate a second. I handed him
my immense wallet, filled mostly with
encouraging notes and photos of my fami-
ly.

"Give me your watch," he said.

I took off my inexpensive Seiko watch
and handed it to him.

"Give me your money," he said.

"I already gave it to you," I said, my first
words to them.

"Give us the rest of it," he said.

"I gave you all of it," I truthfully told
him.

He reached into my suit jacket pocket
and rummaged around then took away his
wand.

"What's in there?" he asked, pointing at
my briefcase.

By this time, I was terrified. What if
they took my money and then just shot
me? What if I were about to die that very
second? Would it hurt? Would my son
and my wife hear the shot and run out?
Would I just lie there and bleed to death?
What about Tommy? Would he grow up
without me? How would my wife ever
deal with him by herself?

Would I ever see my wife again? I was
really scared.

SANTA LUCIA EYE DROPS

The amazing Santa Lucia Eye preparation is made of two
types of plants. It is processed with distilled water and no
preservatives for the specific use of eye washing. It can
be used as part of the nutritional management of all types
of eye conditions. This product can be used safely in
anyone including infants and people with illnesses and it
has no contraindications to its use. It can be used when
there are cataracts, glaucoma, pterygium or irritations.
One drop inside each eye at bedtime will draw toxic
accumulations outside of the eyes. Therefore, it is
considered a purifier.

80% markedly improved:

- **Macular Degeneration**
- **Retinitis Pigmentosa**
- **Conjunctivitis**
- **Glaucoma (5 different types)**
- **Allergic conditions of the eye**
- **Xerostomia (Dry Eye)**
- **Laser Burns**
- **Cataracts (including patients w/implanted lenses)**



"Macular degeneration improved – glaucoma gone after 3 months."
E.V., Nebraska

"Cataracts gone after 3 months."
R.G., Florida

YES!

PLEASE SEND SANTA LUCIA EYE DROPS

(.5 oz Bottle approximately two months supply)

PNP

\$59.95 plus shipping - MO Residents, include \$3.96 sales tax per bottle.
Shipping \$5.95 for 1-6 bottles and \$9.95 for 7-10 bottles.

(Physicians Natural Products)

P.O. Box 1120

Blue Springs, MO 64013-1120

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

For Credit Card Orders Call Toll Free: 877-238-8481 ☐ MC ☐ Visa ☐ Disc.

Credit Card No. _____ Exp. Date _____ Signature _____

We also accept Money Orders and Checks. Pay to order of PNP. Send to Address listed above.

(Personal checks please allow 3 weeks for delivery.)

"Medicines and papers," I said. "You're welcome to it." I handed the briefcase to him. He pushed it away.

"Give me your money," he said for the third time. "Look down."

"I already gave it to you. Would you like my car? It's a great car. Here are the keys. Take it."

I handed him the keys. He knocked them out of my hand.

"Get in the car," he said. "Look forward. Don't look at us."

I was relieved. They were already starting to walk backwards out of the garage. I sat down in the car and faced away from them. If they haven't shot me yet, they probably won't, I thought. I waited a few seconds and then I looked around. They were gone.

I walked rapidly into the house. I walked to the landing of the stairs. "Alex," I said, "I've just been robbed at gunpoint."

"You're kidding," she said as she walked slowly downstairs.

"I'm not kidding," I said. "Right in the garage."

I walked into the study with its twinkling year round Christmas lights and called 911.

"I'm at such and such an address," I said. "I've just been robbed at gunpoint."

"Are you all right?" a woman asked.

"I'm scared but I'm not hurt," I said.

In a minute, the house was surrounded by Beverly Hills police cars and Beverly Hills policemen. I came to the door. I talked to them about the robbery. Our cat, Artemis, escaped and ran away. My wife and son were frantic to find him. They ran all about the front yard.

"Forget the damned cat," I said. "Your husband has just been robbed at the point of a gun."

The police shone lights in the trees in the front yard. "I do not think the robbers climbed up trees and anyway, the robbery was in the back garage."

I went to the garage and gave a report. I was shaking. The police took the report and then came into the kitchen with me. One of them studied the incredibly intricate tile my wife had caused to be put in the kitchen at breathtaking expense.

"The robbers never entered the house," I said. "I don't think you'll find any clues here."

"Oh, I'm just looking because you've done such great stuff with your tile. I like getting calls in this end of Beverly Hills because I always get such great decorating tips."

I AM NOT KIDDING. THIS REALLY HAPPENED.

Tommy said he was scared. I said I'd take him to my West Hollywood apartment, with its ace security, to sleep next to me. I invited Alex but she said she was not scared and wanted to stay in the house. I could not sleep until two in the morning. I kept getting up and looking out the window at the sleeping city. Too much bad stuff is happening to me. My father dying. Puppy-Wuppy dying. That awful flu. Now this. Our old house in the Hollywood Hills had evil power over my family. The house did not want to be left alone. Now I've left it alone and it's angry.

I know it sounds crazy but too many crazy things have been happening. I want some peace and quiet, some respite.

But what a gift from God that those robbers did not pull the trigger. Thank you, dear Lord, for the miracle gift of life. Thank you for letting my Tommy boy lie next to me again.

Sunday

I see on TV that it's bitterly cold in the misty east. It's a bit cold here, too, but we do not have the snow that Wlady has been telling me about in Washington, D.C. I lie in bed with Brigitte and the electric blanket keeps me warm. But I keep thinking about other winters, long ago, in Silver Spring.

When winter came, my father would make preparations. He was a man of foresight, so he would actually start probably when the maples began to change along Sligo Creek Parkway. He would go to Sears Roebuck on Colesville Road and I would go with him. This must have been about 1956, when Eisenhower was president and stocks sold for ten times earnings if they were solid. My father would buy furnace filters, then he would buy lengths of aluminum with grooves in their middle, and new hacksaw blades, and pre-cut, carefully measured plates of glass and lengths of plastic sheeting.

Advertiser Index

You can make a difference for *The American Spectator* by patronizing its advertisers. Whether it's purchasing their products or simply extending your good will, your positive response rewards these organizations for advertising in one of America's finest magazines, *The American Spectator*.

Advertiser	Page #
American Spectator Online	p. 9
Blackstone Audio Books	p. 9
Bose Corporation	p. 3
Classifieds	p. 71
F.L.A.M.E.	p. 19
Forbes	Back Cover
Fox News Channel	p. 2
The Glenlivet/House of Seagram	p. 5
Haverhills	p. 13
Lear Financial	p. 25
Mont Pelerin Society	p. 57
New Oxford Review	p. 17
Santa Lucia Eye Drops	p. 51
Save America Now	p. 11
World Affairs Television	p. 6

To learn more about the benefits of advertising in *The American Spectator*, contact: John Funk, Associate Publisher—Advertising. Phone: 703-243-3733, ext. 236. Address: *The American Spectator*, P.O. Box 549, Arlington, VA 22216-0549.

Then we would go home. He would set up a vise on the edge of the Ping-Pong table—we had room in our basement for a Ping-Pong table. We did not have to buy a whole separate condo for Ping-Pong the way I did a few years ago. He would first take out the old furnace filters and discard them in our ancient metal trash cans, sealed inside an enclosure against squirrels. Then we'd install the new filters. That was the easy part.

Next, my father would start sawing the lengths of aluminum with a hacksaw until he had four parts—sides, top, and bottom—all with the ends at a perfect 45-degree angle. Then he would slide a piece of glass into a sleeve of plastic, and then insert that into the aluminum housing he had made. Then he would add joints that held the sides and top and bottom together, add the top, and bang, he had a homemade storm window. Then, as I recall, my mother would call us to a dinner of flank steak or meatloaf or herb-baked chicken, and Pop would not even brag a word about making those windows. Instead, we'd watch my sister practice her cheers for Eastern Junior High.

He might have made a couple of dozen of these over the course of several winters. Maybe more. The difference they made in keeping out the cold was immense. As my father worked on them, I often noticed how strong his arms were. He had large, muscular forearms and biceps. He never, and I mean never, exercised, so I think he must have just inherited them from his father, a cavalryman and worker on the line at GE and Ford Motor.

The Ping-Pong table was green with many holes in it where we had once installed electric trains. Next to it was an immense gray gas furnace that sprang to life suddenly with a great whoosh, and then turned itself off with a heavy sigh. Next to that was the porcelain-white water heater, which we also seem to have drained on occasion to do something I do not recall. The floors in that part of the basement were a smooth cement, and they were cold in winter. That whole part of the basement was often cold—until he had put up the storm windows. (I do not recall if they broke or got lost in the summer or if he just added to inventory year by year.) My father said, "If it's cold, wear a sweater. Why heat the whole house when you can wear a sweater?"

I can still recall the smell of dust and metal shavings, recall my father swearing when he cut something too long or short, recall his intense concentration as he worked. How could he know how to do it? How could this braino guy, who spent his time reading academic articles about economics, know how to make a window that fit perfectly when it was done?

I used to lie in bed at night and hear the wind howling down Harvey Road or up from Sligo Creek Park, note that it did not come into my room with its chocolate brown walls, and its storm windows, and think, "Pop has kept us warm with these windows. How can he know how to do all this different stuff?"

Now other people live in that house. I wonder if they ever use the storm windows he made? I wonder if any of them survive in a dusty corner of their basement as they do in my memory.

Here in Los Angeles, it's rarely cold. We have no storm windows on any of our many dwellings. We have virtually no storms. If it's the slightest bit cool, my son turns up the heat in his bathroom so high he makes his bedroom like a sauna. He leaves it on when he goes to school. I turn it off and think of a different world, when a Dad was a husband—a Hoos-Band, the man of the house, which he protected by making storm windows by hand, then putting them up and then reading and writing articles about fiscal policy.

Sometimes when my son or my wife say it's cold in the house, I tell them to put on a sweater and they look at me as if I were crazy. "It's not about not having the money to pay the gas bill," I told Tommy recently. "It's in respect to thrift. It's in respect to my father, who told it to me, and his father who probably told it to him. Someday you'll be a father and a husband, too, if God's kind. And then you'll want your family safe and warm, and one way to do that is to not waste money when you can just put on a sweater."

That's a poor substitute for teaching him how to make a storm window, but as I said, we don't have many storms here, and anyway, I don't know how. I just have a memory of it and I cry when I think of Pop and his storm windows, but I also feel warm—and then cold and alone. ❧

MOVING?

TAS Address Changes Made Easy!

1. Please write your new address in the space provided.
2. Attach the mailing label from your most recent issue.
3. Return this form to us at the address listed below.

— That's all there is to it. —

Just be sure to allow six weeks for your change to take effect.

Mail to:

**The
American
Spectator**

Subscriber Service

P.O. Box 655, Mt. Morris, IL

61054-8084

1-800-524-3469

IMPORTANT:

Allow six weeks for address change.

- ☐ Renew my subscription for one year (ten issues—\$34.95)
- ☐ Payment enclosed
- ☐ Bill me later
- ☐ At various times TAS rents its subscriber lists to other organizations. If you prefer that your name not be rented, please check here.

Name: _____

(Please Print)

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip: _____

Date of change: _____

VCAFRM



by Grover G. Norquist

Holding on to Congress

The case for GOP optimism is not far-fetched.

January brought good news for Republicans preparing for the November 7 general election.

On January 20 Nebraska Democratic Sen. Bob Kerrey announced that he would not run for a third term in November. Suddenly Republicans have an open Senate seat they could win. Nebraska Attorney General Don Stenberg is already campaigning for the GOP nomination.

Kerrey joins New York's Daniel Patrick Moynihan, New Jersey's Frank Lautenberg, and Nevada's Richard Bryan as retiring Democrats who would likely have held their seats had they run for re-election. Instead, New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani is consistently polling ten points ahead of Hillary Clinton and has already raised \$12 million. In Nevada, former Rep. John Ensign, who in 1998 narrowly lost his Senate bid to Harry Reid, is polling ahead of wealthy trial lawyer Edward M. Bernstein. And in New Jersey Democrats will choose between former Gov. Jim Florio, who was defeated in 1993 after imposing the largest tax hike in his state's history, and former Goldman Sachs co-chairman Jon Corzine, who brings his own money if not name, I.D., or organization to the race. Either Democrat will get a tough race from the Republican nominee.

Republicans currently hold a 55-45 majority in the Senate. They're likely to win the open seats in New York, Nevada, and Nebraska and are polling ahead in Virginia, where popular former governor George Allen is challenging incumbent Chuck Robb.

GROVER G. NORQUIST is *president of Americans for Tax Reform*.

One GOP concern is the open seat in Florida, where Connie Mack is retiring after three terms. Republicans also worry about incumbents Bill Roth of Delaware, Rod Grams of Minnesota, Spencer Abraham of Michigan, Rick Santorum of Pennsylvania, and John Ashcroft of Missouri. Concern about Jim Jeffords's Vermont seat eased when socialist Rep. Bernie Sanders decided not to challenge him. Anxiety over the late John Chafee's Rhode Island seat has given way to confidence now that Chafee's son Lincoln, who was appointed to succeed his father, is polling strongly. A strong GOP year will have Republicans gain three or four Senate seats. A truly bad year will see them lose two or three seats—and still maintain their majority.

On January 24, Virgil Goode, the Democratic congressman from the fifth district in southern Virginia tobacco country, announced that he was leaving his party to run as an independent. Goode has one of the more conservative voting records in Congress, winning an 84 percent rating from the American Conservative Union in 1997 and 83 percent in 1998. Goode voted for three counts of impeachment and opposed Bill Clinton 74 percent of the time in 1998. He will almost certainly win re-election.

Goode's defection hurts the Democrats' chances to win back the House. They thought they'd need a net gain of five seats to re-capture control. Now they'll need a net of six, because Goode has announced he will organize with the Republicans.

The case for Democratic optimism is based on the success Democrats have had chipping away at the Republicans' post-1994 majority of 236-198. Democrats took

back eight seats in 1996 and another five in 1998. Michael Forbes's defection last year gave them yet another seat. If the pattern holds, they could win the six seats they need.

What's more, unlike the Senate, House retirements hurt GOP chances. As of January, 22 Republican congressmen were retiring, but only six Democrats.

The disparity, however, may not hurt Republicans as much as Democrats would wish. Of the six Democratic open seats, only two are safe: Bill Clay's Missouri district, where Clinton beat Dole in 1996, 74 percent to 20 percent, and Robert Weygand's Rhode Island district, which voted 59-28 for Clinton over Dole. Of the remaining open seats, Democrats concede that Republicans will pick up Owen Pickett's Virginia district. The other three will offer real contests. The GOP has a good shot at Ron Klink's Pittsburgh seat, where Republican state Senator Melissa Hart was off and running even before Klink left to run for Rick Santorum's Senate seat. Republicans are also optimistic about Dick Chrysler's old district in Michigan, which Democrat Debbie Stabenow won in 1996 but is now vacating to challenge Sen. Spence Abraham. The GOP candidate is Mike Rogers, the state senate floor leader who has raised more than \$600,000. West Virginia's second district, which Bob Wise is vacating, wouldn't normally raise Republican hopes, but the Republican candidate is Shelly Moore Capito, daughter of the former governor. She has \$280,000 in the bank and will face the winner of a bitter Democratic primary.

Of the 22 Republican open seats, nine are up in the air but 13 remain safe. Among the latter is retiring Ways and Means Chairman Bill Archer's district, which gave Dole a 38-point margin in 1996. On paper, the most likely Democratic pickup is Califor-