

## DEATH PENALTY BE NOT PROUD

Your anti-capital punishment position ("Capital Brutality" by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr., February 2001) is off-mark. It is a wonderful thing to be able to discuss

### CORRESPONDENCE

the pros and cons about capital punishment as you jet from your relatively safe home to your relatively safe office in your relatively safe world. But the reality of the situation is that capital punishment exists for a more basic reason than mere "justice" or "retribution." Capital punishment is a crude but effective way of assuring society that a particular heinous felon will never have the opportunity to maim, rape, or kill again.

That is the point of capital punishment. There are cases here in Florida and other states where death-sentenced offenders and lifers escaped and went on criminal rampages resulting in the death of more innocent people. There are cases of criminals so extreme they have killed other inmates.

Now, as a police detective with a decade under my belt, I can say I am for the death penalty only if guilt is beyond doubt. When that level is reached, and the offender is so extreme that we know if he lives he will harm again, then it's time to pull the switch, hit the plunger, drop the gallows door, and end it.

Being responsible for a society is a tough job and sometimes you will have to do things that may fly in the face of your personal beliefs. But the next Polly Klauss or the next Texas cop will thank you....

R. WISHER, VIA THE INTERNET

R. Emmett Tyrrell and I part ways with his article in the February 2001 issue where he "comes out" against the death penalty. If RET has decided to undertake some sort of do-gooder crusade, I wish he would at least do so for crime victims—not even given honorable mention in his article.

I am repulsed not so much by RET's failure to support capital punishment as I am by the weakness of his facts, argu-

ments, and conclusions. RET's article did not persuade me in any way to even consider his fledgling thoughts and feelings on this issue. Obviously, I won't be renewing my subscription.

MARTIN GREGOR, BARKHAMSTED, CONN.

I always love reading anything that RET writes, but when I saw his recent piece titled "Capital Brutality" I was uplifted. You see, for years I have thought that I am the only conservative who has consistently been anti-death penalty, in fact, probably the only person I know of any persuasion who is anti-death penalty—I would only add two things to what he said: (1) someone who is pro-life cannot also logically be pro-death penalty as so many of these advocates are—in other words, it is only God's prerogative to take away the life He created; and (2) our government is infected throughout with morally defective individuals, many of whom have the lawful ability to make a death sentence happen. It is intolerable, immoral, and highly uncivilized that such a state of affairs should exist. Why should we have our government descending to the behavior of the absolute lowest of our society?

MICHAEL BLANCHARD, CICERO, ILLINOIS

## DON'T ASK, DON'T CARE

In the February issue, Mr. Ben Stein tells of the military enlisted man in the hospital with his son who has cancer. Mr. Stein cares for others and his comments concerning the low pay of military personnel were greatly appreciated.

Most people do not realize that this enlisted man in all probability faces a nightmare paying the hospital bill through the medical program (TRICARE) that the government contracts for military personnel to use when military medical facilities are not available. Many medical practitioners will not accept TRICARE because it pays a lesser percentage than Medicare, payments are late, and claims processing is a study in red tape.

The young men and women in the service know how we who served before them have been treated—it is one of the

reasons the military services are having a difficult time retaining personnel.

NORMAN CAMPBELL, MARSHFIELD, MASS.

## MISSING INGREDIENT FOUND

Tyrrell's anti-capital punishment essay and those awful cartoons made me look again to make sure I wasn't reading the *New Yorker*.

JAMES J. WHITE, RAPHAINE, VIRGINIA

I've been subscribing to, reading, and saving *The American Spectator* for more than 25 years and have always had a nagging feeling that something was missing. The February issue showed me that what was missing were cartoons! I love the cartoons and look forward to more of them. Disregard any suggestions from anal-retentive types who might suggest that *TAS* now looks more like the *New Yorker* (the *New Yorker* should be so lucky).

DONALD WARD, WALNUT, CALIFORNIA

## BOOK TALK

When I subscribed to *TAS* over seven years ago, one section that I immediately enjoyed was the book reviews. Over the years, I have learned as much from them as I have from the outstanding articles. However, in the February 2001 issue, Tyrrell's review of Burleigh's and Kershaw's books on Adolf Hitler was an absolute pleasure to read.

The piece was well-written (as all of his are), intelligent, and downright funny! I never thought humor could be drawn from a tyrannical madman, but Tyrrell did just that. The genius of the piece was his effort to tie it in with recent events concerning our former Fearless Leader, e.g., Boy Clinton.

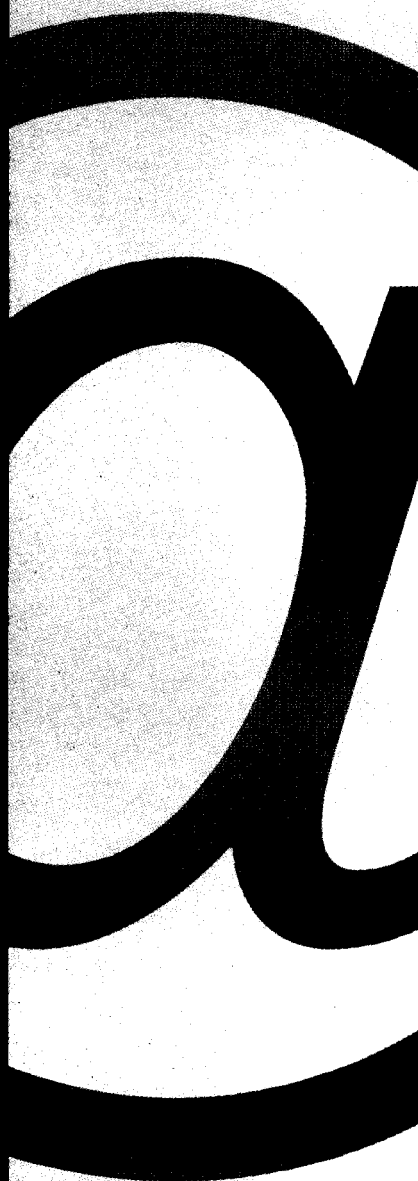
One additional point to be made is that everyone needs to read Manchester's magnificent work on Churchill, *The Last Lion*. Volume two describes his lonely struggle in the wilderness, and his triumphant vindication.

Keep on churning out the reviews; we in the heart of Dixie sure appreciate them!

DAVID W. HESTER, MORRIS, ALABAMA

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SENSE



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**I**n a 1998 front-page story, "From Addiction Back to Influence in Tax Cut Fray," the *Washington Post* reported that Larry Kudlow, "the reigning optimist on Wall Street," was forecasting budget surpluses "hundreds of billions beyond those predicted" by government officials and consensus-minded economists. His many detractors considered his forecast to be "wishful thinking," in defiance of "mainstream economic models."

But Kudlow—today the chief investment strategist and senior managing director of ING Barings—was right, just as he had been right in predicting the Dow at 10,000 five years before it happened, and in calling the timing of the 1990-1991 recession and its subsequent recovery.

Born in 1947, Kudlow grew up in New Jersey and studied politics and economics at the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton, but cheerfully points out that he is burdened with no advanced degrees. When it comes to financial markets he regards himself as self-taught. He has worked at the New York Federal Reserve Bank, and at the Office of Management and Budget under Reagan.

In 1994, the *New York Times* published a full-page article, "A Wall Street Star's Agonizing Confession," about Kudlow's life and addiction to cocaine. He resigned from his \$1 million a year job at Bear Stearns after missing a speaking engagement with some of the firm's best clients. In 1995 he entered a drug and alcohol treatment program in Minnesota, and two years later converted to Catholicism. Recently, he has been on the Bush-Cheney transition advisory committee.

In our interview, Kudlow talks about his experiences, economic prospects for the new administration, the economic indicators that get his attention, his forecasts for 2010, and his faith.

# LAWRENCE KUDLOW

**THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR:** What do you think of George W. Bush?

**LAWRENCE KUDLOW:** You know, to meet him is reassuring. He's fascinating, because he's real smart, and yet he doesn't have to prove it to you.

**TAS:** Who does that remind us of?

**KUDLOW:** Right. Reagan. Marty Anderson [assistant for domestic affairs in the Reagan Administration] told me there was a bit of Reagan in George W. I was still in my anti-Papa Bush mode, thinking one Bush was enough for any country. But W. wound up with the best of the Bush character and family values—which Papa Bush always had—without the squishy policy thinking. And I think I know why.

he came within an inch of losing his wife. Laura said, you know, "It's either me or the bottle." She basically was out of there. I am impressed with W's fortitude. The fashionable world is against him but he hangs tough. He goes to Washington after the election and he has a series of tension-filled photo-ops. Very clumsy looking. You can see it in the body language. He had to sit there with Clinton, sit there with Gore. But he steadfastly talked about two things. Lower tax rates and the slowdown of the economy, and the need for religious faith. He is showing Reagan-esque discipline.

**TAS:** Staying on message.

**KUDLOW:** If Bush keeps this up he will gain the country's support. Most people in this

**"You're going to see a massive recovery of the NASDAQ. The mix of companies will change, but the bandwidth revolution will come and lead the NASDAQ to 10,000..."**

**TAS:** Why?

**KUDLOW:** One of the things I learned from my own crash and burn is it's good to fail. You learn a lot when you fail. I don't think his father ever suffered. Losing an election is not suffering. It's not a real loss like losing your job, or your wife, or your money. Papa Bush had pretty smooth going, but W. had two big setbacks. He lost his business and was ashamed for years about that. He basically lost his shirt as oil prices collapsed in the 1980s. And from his bittersweet experiences in the Texas oil patch, I think he developed more of an entrepreneurial outlook.

**TAS:** The other setback?

**KUDLOW:** His business failure was one of the reasons he drank so much. And then

country work in a business, and most are small businesses. They know there are really only two or three important things. So when they see a president who hammers away at two or three things, they like him. It reminds them of their own life.

**TAS:** You know him a bit, don't you?

**KUDLOW:** We were roommates for a few days in the mid-'80s. It was a golf outing at Pebble Beach, organized by Steve Dart, Justin Dart's son. I am not a bosom buddy, but you do get acquainted that way. But the last time we had spoken before the campaign was in 1992. He was furious at me, because I was criticizing his father on the air. He called and just reamed me out. I said, "Bushy, I'm sorry. You fire Nick Brady, Dick Darman, and Mike Boskin