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letters

What to Make of Those Democrats?

Assistant Editor Bill Kauffman's description of himself as an "Andrew Jackson Democrat" is quite apt; judging from his December piece on the Democrats, "Desperately Seeking Solutions," he seems to have missed much of the last 160 years.

Don't get me wrong—much of Kauffman's analysis of Democratic factionalism is quite cogent. But his attempt to hew so closely to your party line forced him into inevitable internal contradictions, misinterpretations, and selective reading of sources, including my book *The Neoliberals: Creating The New American Politics* (which remains curiously uncredited in the piece, despite its obvious usefulness).

Surely Kauffman knows that *The New Republic's* Herbert Croly not only wrote of "the destructive individualism of Jeffersonianism," but of the need (in historian Charles Forcey's words) to use "Hamiltonian means to achieve Jeffersonian ends." And surely Kauffman recalls that the modern interventionist state, particularly as it relates to economic and social progress, was primarily a political invention of the *Republican* Roosevelt, a follower of Croly, who recognized (as eventually did Democrat Wilson and the other Roosevelt) that the anti-competitive, anti-individualistic spectre of industrial monopoly simply could not be managed by blind adherence to 19th-century free-market bromides.

Indeed, Kauffman's major error is not understanding that the basis of liberalism as a political creed was not frozen in the 19th century, but by its very nature is an evolving doctrine. As Eric Goldman made clear in his classic history of American liberalism *Rendezvous With Destiny*, liberalism has always allied itself with institutional reform aimed at promoting progress and the greatest exercise of individual freedom consonant with the freedom of the whole.

Kauffman mistakenly views the neoliberals' adherence to the principles of free trade, contra their Mondaloid brethren, as partial fealty to 19th-century principles, rather than as an example of

economic internationalism (distinct from strategic internationalism) bred by their belief in the economically unifying power of new communications technologies.

And Kauffman is also mistakenly selective in criticizing Gary Hart and Paul Tsongas for supporting an oil-import fee, without also indicating that both Hart and Tsongas, indeed most of the congressional neoliberals, were in the forefront of the energy price-decontrol wars during the late 1970s and early 1980s. Tsongas and Bill Bradley, for example, were the only two Senate Democrats from the Northeast to oppose re-implication of oil price controls during the first year of the Reagan administration.

One final point, a big one. I simply cannot understand how a libertarian can support President Reagan's Space Defense Initiative without falsely justifying what would amount to the costliest transfer-of-wealth between government and private sector in our history. There is a growing body of work suggesting that our competitive disadvantage in the commercialization of information-age technologies derives from the military establishment's control of our nation's R&D apparatus. Inasmuch as Star Wars would further concentrate research, development, and application of critical new technologies with a mere handful of bloated and bureaucratically bound military contractors, it could hamper economic progress for decades to come.

Randall Rothenberg
Esquire
New York, NY

Mr. Kauffman replies: Well, gosh, what can I say? Except that Mr. Rothenberg's neoliberalism seems to be based on a discredited, fairy-tale interpretation of the Progressive Era that has few adherents outside the Arthur Schlesinger school for court historians. Gabriel Kolko exposed the "anti-competitive, anti-individualistic spectre of industrial monopoly" nonsense 20 years ago in *The Triumph of Conservatism*. The trend in

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letters

the late 19th century was toward competition and decentralism; the progressives and their big business allies scotched that and created the regulatory state so dear to Herbert Croly's heart. My "party line" reading of American history owes much to courageous leftist and even (gasp!) Marxist historians such as Kolko, William A. Williams, Ronald Radosh, and Christopher Lasch—no libertarians, they.

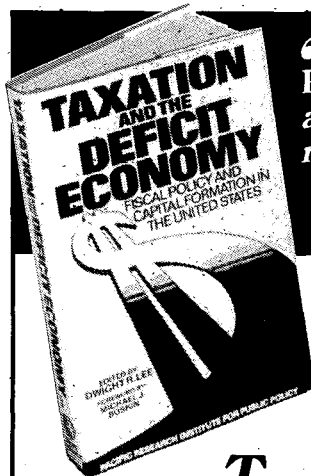
Briefly: My failure to mention Mr. Rothenberg's fine book isn't so "curious"; I've never read it. Next on my list, I promise. As for "the economically unifying power of new communications technologies," frankly, I have no idea what this means. But I'm probably against it. I support SDI because I'm an isolationist and I believe that defensive weapon systems are a tad less immoral than offensive ones. (By the way, the American Enterprise Institute's Karl Zinsmeister points out that the federal government's share of all US R&D has declined from 64 percent in 1960 to 46 percent in 1984, contra Rothenberg.) I'm glad Bill Bradley and Paul Tsongas opposed oil price controls. And finally, if respect for individual rights is a "19th-century principle," heaven help us all.

Getting to Know You

I find myself in agreement with Tibor Machan's conclusion ("Assault on the Passions," Jan.) that we must reject the "dichotomy between spirit and body and the corresponding denigration of the human passions." However, I strongly disagree with his nescient assumptions that Christianity promotes this dichotomy.

The Bible condemns any sexual activity outside the husband-wife relationship as sinful. But between the husband and wife, the Bible supports and encourages sexual passion. Paul, who mistakenly is said by Mr. Machan to find sex less than completely noble, wrote that a husband has an obligation to have sexual relations with his wife regularly and she with him (I Corinthians 7:3). Paul in this passage condemns that very dichotomy that Mr. Machan condemns. He emphasizes that we are sexual creatures and to deny this and abstain will only lead to trouble.

Unfortunately, many Christians do believe sex is somehow dirty and unclean. But that is not the teaching of the Scriptures. A couple of examples: The Song of Solomon is a beautiful poem



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of the passionate, sexual love between a husband and wife. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ, the apostle Paul, and the writer of Hebrews all commend sexual intimacy in marriage.

In summary, Christians believe God created the sexual drives in both men and women. He made the intense pleasure of sex for us to experience and enjoy. But sex is to be experienced only within the marriage relationship.

*Rev. Bruce L. Prentice
Lewistown, MT*

Defending Sleazeballs

Marvin Olasky picked the wrong villains in his article "Hornswoggled" (Feb.). Samuel Insull and Theodore Vail may have been sleazeballs according to your moral code (the nonaggression principle), but they were simply individuals acting in their own self-interest. They were consummate businessmen, and succeeded admirably. The real villains were the rest of the people in America, who let them get away with it.

In any society, even a libertarian one, there will be those who disagree with the prevailing moral code. Your condemnation reminds me of those who moralize against drugs. In any event, you missed the important history lesson here: there will always be such schemers around, as summarized by the old bromide, "the price of liberty is eternal vigilance."

*Robert L. Walton
Fairport, NY*

Swiss Choose Wisely

Mark Skousen's advice (Investments, Feb.) on how to protect our purse if the history of the '20s and '30s repeats itself is sound and maybe timely. But what are we to do to protect what is even more precious than our pocketbook—that being what little is left of our freedom?

Most of the freedom from oppressive government bequeathed us by our forefathers was lost in FDR's combat with the '30s depression. This nation cannot survive another depression as severe as that. If we do have one, the people will rightfully demand a change from the politicians-dominated government that brought it on. Every other representative democracy that has failed has been followed by a dictatorship. Is that what we can expect?

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There is a better solution. That solution is direct democracy, the form of government wherein the people keep unto themselves the power to make the laws. Switzerland has had this form of government for 700 years. While nearly all the rest of the earth's nations have muddled through wars and depressions, the racially and religiously differing Swiss have moved right along peacefully, making profits.

If we would protect our freedom from the chaos of a '30s-style depression, we had best amend our constitution to vest the power of legislation in the people, something Madison probably would have done 200 years ago had there been available the communications, transportation, and computers that we have today.

George Bourland
Concord, CA

Who Speaks For the Fetus?

Being a new subscriber, I did not participate in the recent reader survey, but reading the results in your Up Front column (Jan.) disturbed me. Because regarding abortion, *you asked the wrong question!* Your question was useless because it solicited a response to only the very opposite extreme of abortion on demand; it sidestepped the abortion issue entirely.

Even those of us who oppose *all* abortions know that in rare cases current medical technology is unable to save the life of the unborn child and to continue bearing the child would kill the mother. Though aborting the pregnancy is unavoidable in such unfortunate circumstances, it is still undesirable (most people would prefer that advances in medical science occur such that the lives of both individuals can be preserved).

Civil rights makes abortion an issue, not rare cases of self-defense. *Whose* civil rights is what the issue is all about. Asking if your readers would support or oppose banning all abortions doesn't produce any information—it merely confuses the issue. If you want to know your readers' views, ask: "Is the human fetus a living human being with rights separate from those of its mother?" The answer to this question determines how reasonable people must view the abortion issue.

Leland Hosford
Cedar Rapids, IA

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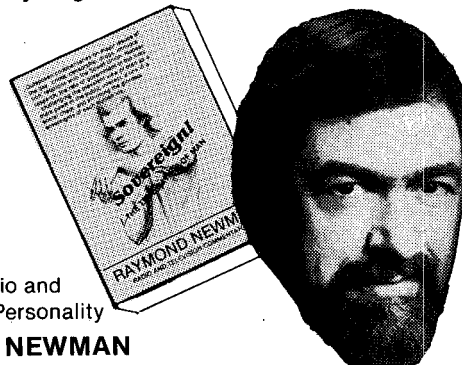
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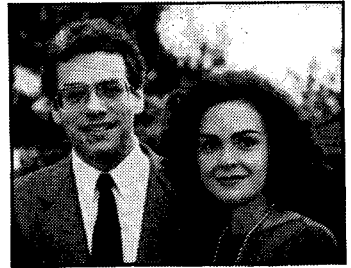
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About seven years ago, at a party, Nancy and I were introduced to a successful travel agent. We were excited to meet him. Both of us had dreamed of traveling worldwide but could never afford it. We'd also heard about the fat commission checks and free travel benefits in the travel business.

"I wish there was a way we could get involved in travel without having to start a travel agency," I said.

The travel agent smiled. "Perhaps I shouldn't tell you this," he said, "but you can now run a part-time or full-time travel business out of your home."

"What kind of an investment does it take?" asked Nancy, who had the unpleasant task of balancing our checkbook.

"It doesn't cost a dime," was his reply.

We couldn't believe our ears. "How can we find out more?" we both exclaimed.

The travel agent hesitated for a moment. Finally, he said, "All right, if you're really interested, I'll show you how you can do it."

I don't know why, but I suddenly found myself making excuses. "I don't have any experience," I said, "and besides, I'm really busy."

"I can teach you everything you need to know in a few hours. And in your own business, you can do as much or as little as you choose," was his reply.

Then, looking me straight in the eye, he said something that really shook me. "Look, Ben, a lot of people wish and want but never act. If you really want to find out more, be at my office tomorrow morning. If you're just a talker, I'll probably never see you again." And with that, he turned around and left.

That night, I tossed and turned a lot. I guess it was hard to believe that something this good could happen to us. I was skeptical, but I made the appointment...

To make a long story short, our lives were changed by what I found out that morning. As a result, for the past seven years, Nancy and I have made terrific income in travel. In fact, on just one trip we helped put together recently, we made more than my yearly salary used to be.

We've also met others who are quietly getting rich doing the same thing—people like Jerry, a former corporate executive, who is now making a fortune running his home-based travel business... or Elaine, a wife and mother of four boys, who, starting in her basement, has built a multi-million dollar travel empire.

In addition to money, the travel business offers tremendous benefits

to those who are on the "inside." Nancy and I have enjoyed many expense-paid dream vacations. We've sunbathed on the beaches of the Caribbean, lain on the pink sands of Bermuda, and returned to the lush shores of Hawaii again and again. Imagine staying in a \$250-a-night V.I.P. suite as a guest of the hotel and being wined and dined to your heart's content. We just couldn't believe all these wonderful things were happening to us! Of course, we've earned these benefits. But it has always been lots of fun and really quite easy—something anyone can do—something you can do!

Our friends couldn't believe it either. At first, they thought we'd inherited a bundle from a rich aunt. One friend, after picking us up at the airport from one of our Hawaiian trips, stopped the car and said, "I'm not taking you home 'til you tell me how you're doing this." As the word spread, more and more friends began to ask questions. We really couldn't blame them—they also wanted to enjoy more money and free travel. But their questions and our answers were taking too much time. That's when we finally decided to organize our knowledge and experience on paper.

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What Do the Federales Fear?

Marty Zupan

This section of the law had never been invoked before. When it was invoked, it was against a large and growing minority. South Africa? No.

The law had to be stretched and twisted by a government functionary to apply to the case at hand. The Soviet Union? No.

The law was used to clamp down on a media organ that the government claimed had grown too powerful. A South American military dictatorship? No.

Unfortunately, we're talking about the United States and a little-remarked case that shows how inimical to the liberty of a free people is the government's power to regulate broadcasting.

In January, an administrative law judge at the Federal Communications Commission ruled that the broadcasting licenses of 13 Spanish-language stations around the country could not be renewed. Judge John H. Conlin decided that the stations should lose their licenses because they are illegally controlled and influenced by Emilio Azcarraga, a Mexican "media baron." What's illegal about it? Well, here's where the stretching and twisting comes in.

Federal law limits foreign ownership of domestic TV and radio stations to 20 percent. Conlin admitted in his ruling that Azcarraga has not bumped up against that limit. But his honor didn't like the situation anyway. "The groundwork has been laid," Judge Conlin charged, "for an enterprise that would be receptive to, and indeed, dependent on influence and direction from non-U.S. citizens and foreign corporations."

The heart of the issue here is not the precise determination of whether the 13 stations are or are not "too controlled" by a Mexican national who has made a success of broadcasting ownership in his own country and then in ours. Azcarraga also controls the Spanish International Network, which supplies programming

to those and a host of other stations, much as the major US networks supply programming to their affiliates across the country. SIN reaches some 80 percent of the nation's Latino community. This supposedly alarming situation is also discussed in the judge's ruling. So it's pretty clear that it's this whole ball of wax that's sticking in the FCC's craw, and not 20 percent ownership of particular stations.

Now Congress made the law, of course. For a people who so jealously guard freedom of the print media, we've been remarkably tolerant of government meddling with the broadcast media. However much the federal government has loosened its grip on broadcasting—and it has done a great deal in the last few years—the basic premise remains: the government must regulate broadcasting. And that inevitably means that government has the power to control what comes out of our TVs and radios.

The FCC, and others, will protest that this case is simply a matter of ownership,

not of content. An FCC lawyer questioned about the ruling said that the stations were given plenty of opportunity to "reorganize" to avoid the problem. But if it's not content they're worried about, why care about the nationality of the ownership? Why the 20 percent rule in the first place if there's not some lurking suspicion of what "they" might be broadcasting to gullible citizens if "they" gain too much control?

In fact, in the wake of the ruling a lot of stations are bound to scramble to adjust their programming to meet the apparent wishes of the FCC. And that's the insidious result of allowing the government to have say-so over broadcasting. That's why Rep. Robert Garcia (D-N.Y.) is worried that the ruling could mean "a new Anglicized era in Spanish broadcasting" and observes pointedly that the FCC's action calls into question the issue of "control of this very important medium in the United States." Indeed. Perhaps he can get the rest of the Congress to consider that the people should be trusted with their liberty. □

Tax and Spend: Lowering the Boom?

Robert W. Poole, Jr.

As you sit down to figure out your income taxes this April, brace yourself. Because the campaign to soften you up for yet another whopping tax increase is shifting into high gear.

Everywhere, you hear denunciations of the "mindless havoc" being wrought by the Gramm-Rudman attempt at controlling federal spending. "Spending has been cut to the bone," they bleat, echo-

ing the rhetoric of the most profligate Congress in 200 years. Yet after all the alleged cutting, we taxpayers are still footing the bill for a \$23-billion-per-year program of farm subsidies, a massive new pork-barrel water projects bill, a bloated and untouchable Social Security system, and scores of special-interest subsidies.

So since Congress *will not* cut spending