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**BOOK ADVERTISERS**

## REASON'S ANNUAL BOOK ISSUE DECEMBER 1986

■ Our annual book issue is in our readers' homes by mid-November — perfectly timed for holiday gift buying.

■ Our reader surveys show that fiction, history, current affairs, philosophy, science, and science fiction are high on our readers' book-buying lists.

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# up front

## Publishing the Computer Way



**T**hroughout its existence, this magazine has been something of a cheerleader for technology. In defending and celebrating the power of reason, we've done our share of marveling at its many new-fangled fruits. Recently we had the opportunity to put our money where our mouths are, so to speak, and boldly venture into the exciting—and often bewildering—world of computerized publishing.

Last year, we took the first step by computerizing the editorial department, setting up the editors with their own PCs (a move initially not welcomed by all parties concerned, but the seductive power of the PC has won us all over). Now, nearly all of our manuscript editing and in-house writing is done on the little purring machines, and we actually find ourselves talking about things like modems and floppies and disk drives.

With this issue, we intrepidly plunge head-on into the new technology. Nearly all of the editorial pages in the magazine before you were "composed" on our trusty PCs, using an amazing and powerful piece of software called Superpage. Created by the Pennsylvania-based company Bestinfo, Superpage enables a PC to instruct a typesetting device to generate a whole page—text, rules, captions, headlines, page numbers—everything but photos and illustrations (though, with the appropriate devices—still out of our financial range—that's even possible).

Sitting at our computers, we can edit an article, design a page on screen, fill it with the edited copy, and zap it by phone to our computer composition company. Within minutes, a bunch of electronic signals are converted into a whole page that can be sent off to our printer as is.

By contrast, in our days B.C. (before computerization), we would edit paper manuscripts (what we call "hard copy"), marking

them up with various instructions for our human typesetter. Several days later we'd get strips of "galley type" back, which would then be cut up and pasted down onto boards—along with separate captions, headlines, and rules, all to be aligned by eye and hand. It was a highly labor-intensive, time-consuming, and expensive process.

So we're happy, right? Sitting easy with all kinds of extra time and money on our hands, right? Well...wonderful though the technology may be, it's not without its problems, quirks, and impenetrable mysteries. One lesson we've learned from this adventure (aside from being again reminded of those two great eternal truths—that reality never goes according to expectations and that if something can go wrong it will) is how difficult learning a new technology can be, particularly one that is young and relatively untested.

But if the system eventually performs according to expectation (or at least close to it), our savings would outstrip the cost of the software in less than a year's time—a good investment, we'd say. And thus far, we like what we see—and we hope you do, as well.

Regular readers will notice that this issue has a somewhat different look to it, incorporating some subtle design changes. (Curious observers should compare this issue with our August-September number to see the changes.) Doubtless, a few more slight changes in the magazine's graphic appearance are yet to come, as we continue to adjust to our new way of doing things. Let us know what you think.

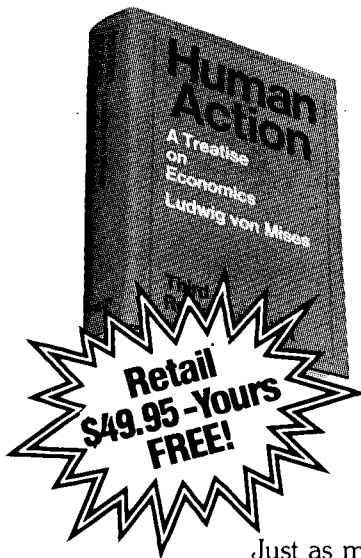
Managing the whole computerized production process from start to finish will be our new full-time production manager, Nanette Campbell. With nearly 10 years of experience in various areas of print production, Nan's eager to take on the new technology and wrestle with those formidable keyboards.

In addition to her many other responsibilities, Nan will be taking over from me many of the functions I've performed as managing editor over the past several years, as I delete myself from the magazine's masthead to pursue other interests. May she, and the rest of the gang new and old, have as much fun on the magazine as I've had.

—Eric Marti

# "Perhaps the most important economic treatise of our time"

— WALL STREET JOURNAL



*Human Action* is the most compelling case for economic freedom ever made. It is the free-market answer to Marx's *Das Kapital* and Keynes's *General Theory*.

And it is fascinating. Mises is a cool logician, our greatest economic scholar, a passionate lover of freedom — and a passionate hater of those who would take it away from us. Thus *Human Action* is the economic masterwork of our age — and, at the same time, a soaring hymn to human freedom.

Mises has nothing but scorn for the phony "compassion" of the Marxians and Keynesians — because he sees how their theories actually breed suffering. One by one, he sweeps away the dangerous fallacies of liberalism and socialism.

Finally, this book is a warning.

Just as man ignores the law of gravity at his peril, so too the immutable laws of economics.

As Mises aptly puts it:

**"It rests with men whether they will make proper use of the rich treasure with which this knowledge [of economics] provides them or whether they will leave it unused. But if they fail to take the best advantage of it and disregard its teachings and warnings, they will not annul economics; they will stamp our society and the human race."**

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## Thais: Armed with Self-Respect

Maurice Tanner's timely and accurate feature on Thailand ("Welcome to the Domino That Didn't Fall," July) struck a responsive chord. For the last five years I have worked with American companies setting up joint ventures in Thailand and the Philippines. The contrast between the two is striking. Filipinos are conditioned to look for government solutions to problems and to blame the government when their expectations are not met. Thais, by contrast, have a lot less to work with but have come much farther by believing they can prosper by their own ambitions.

All over the world the examples are in place. European interventionists will have trouble ignoring countries like Thailand.

Larry Grupp  
Moscow, ID

## Buckley on Drugs

In his review (July) of William F. Buckley's book *Right Reason*, Bill Kauffman writes that, insofar as drug use is concerned, Buckley's commitment to personal liberty extends no further than his belief that heroin should be made available to terminally ill cancer patients.

But this book is apparently not a reliable guide to Buckley's views on the subject. In the summer of 1985, perhaps too late for inclusion in *Right Reason*, he wrote in his syndicated column that eliminating street drugs is impossible in a democratic society and that "therefore we are probably better off licensing the drugs and mounting huge campaigns against their use." More recently, in *National Review* he described the

decriminalization of drugs as "the only sensible course for America."

There are, of course, plenty of areas in which Buckley's views are still hostile to personal liberty, and he sees the decriminalization of drugs as a necessary evil rather than a positive good. But his commitment to freedom is nevertheless a bit stronger than Kauffman's review suggests.

Charles D. Poe  
Houston, TX

## What Does Means Really Mean?

I enjoyed the interview (Aug.-Sept.) with Russell Means. But I wish that your interviewer had pinned Means down and either made him answer or say that he would not answer certain questions. For example: "Would you be satisfied with governments at all levels deregulating Indian affairs, abandoning existing distinctions, and treating Indians like any other US citizens?" Means parried the question by saying Indians are forced to be US citizens. Most Indians today received US citizenship the same way most non-Indians received it—by being born in the United States.

I would like to know if Means wants no special treatment or better special treatment for Indians.

John G. Tietz  
Hamilton, MT

## The State Against Indians

Much can be learned from the words of Russell Means, even though some of his tactics may seem distasteful or ill-advised. His courage in speaking out against the Sandinista genocide of his Indian brothers in Nicaragua merits our respect, since it has made him a pariah to the American left.

At the beginning of the Reagan administration I had the responsibility for attempting to coordinate Indian policy in the White House. Despite Reagan's very sincere concern about Indians, his administration was no more able than its predecessors to address

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