



My Thoughts On...

Domestic Terrorism, Iraq and the Economy, and Native Americans

Domestic Terrorism

President George W. Bush has incessantly told us that he wishes to protect "the homeland," our values, and American citizens' freedom and liberty from "terrorism." In addition to worrying about al Qaeda, I suggest that - if he's really serious - he focus at least some attention on the kind of terrorism increasingly being unleashed on God-fearing American families and their children by state agencies across America.

On page 15, you'll be reading about Steve Spanios and his family. Spanios' teenage daughter, as many unfortunately do these days due to peer pressure and our society's declining morals, became rebellious. As any Christian father would, Steve sought to rein in his daughter, set new ground rules for who she could associate with and finally decided she should be educated at home with her three siblings. The daughter - encouraged by another party - turned this into some form of "abuse" and in came Florida's Department of Children and Families (DCF).

The DCF has turned this family upside down. Spanios was recently forced into having to raise his children alone, his wife having left him not long ago. A devout Christian, Spanios believes that it is *his responsibility* to care for his family. He has received support from friends, relatives, and even members of his local law enforcement community. A prosecutor has stated that there is no cause to charge Steve with *anything*. Yet a tyrannical judge working with this out-of-control and seemingly unaccountable agency has now turned this father and the three children still in his care into fugitives.

Each time I hear a story like this, it brings back memories. In the late 1980s I, too, was a fugitive. Wanting with my

wife to educate my children at home and refusing to allow our local school district's involvement, I was charged with "educational neglect." After living away from our upstate New York home for several months, we finally decided to leave New York for good. During this time life, business and our family's "routine" were disrupted; all because social workers and assorted other do-gooders have been given virtually unchecked power beyond that of any other kind of agency, either state or federal.

Sometimes - as much as I hate to admit it - workers in these "child protective"-type agencies actually manage to do some good. I'm not naïve enough to believe that every parent is a good parent; sometimes, children are indeed in danger of one kind or another and must be helped or rescued (though it would be much better done by local churches or caring family members outside the home in question.)

Yet, two things are unmistakable. First, too many of the families set upon are devoutly Christian. Far from the platitudes that regularly come from politicians and even most pulpits, parents who seek to raise their children as virtually all were raised years ago are seen as oddballs; even as "dangerous" because of their "extremist" beliefs. Social workers generally jump at the chance to "save" children from such backward parents - and know that the demonization of the parents' and children's beliefs and Faith will usually protect them from wide criticism.

Second, no matter who is involved, these unconstitutional agencies run amok often have no more than money



in mind when they set upon their victims. Most receive funding based in great part on how many children they have brought under their control. Just like any other agencies that will wantonly blow money (especially at the end of a fiscal year) in order to show they need all of it (and more) in the coming year, agencies like the DCF think they have to keep their abductions going up to keep ever more dollars rolling in. And if they ruin families' lives in the process, so what.

Having lived through this myself, I can tell you that there is no kind of "terror" a parent has to live with like that of fearing about security of the children you love - especially if this includes the prospect of having them stolen from you. I am sure that the last thing on

Steve Spanios' mind right now is his family being kept safe from Osama bin Laden or Saddam Hussein. He needs to be protected from his own government's out-of-control bureaucrats and do-gooders. If Junior and his brother were serious about standing up for conservatism, our heritage, family values and all the rest, *both* would give the kind of ultimatum to the DCF that was just delivered to Saddam Hussein.

Iraq and the Economy

Historically, governments have plunged their citizens into war for largely economic reasons. There's nothing like a "war economy" to put people back to work, and rescue business from a period of lethargy and weak demand elsewhere.

The trouble now is that - with stocks in the third year of a bear market and with the economy showing an inability to mount a sustained recovery - we might be about to redefine the way in which war affects America's bottom line. Specifically, I'm more of the opinion that, far from hoping that a war against Iraq will "rescue" economic growth, it might instead serve the purpose of being an excuse for the economy's continued failure to move forward.

Before the war talk and before 9/11, the economy had already started down a Japan-like road of an unwinding of years' worth of accumulating debt and a related asset bubble. Policy makers do *not* want to talk about this, or about why historic interest rate cuts by the Federal Reserve aren't doing the trick. You see, to properly address these subjects we would need to get to the root of our problem; a fractional reserve banking system that is mathematically doomed to fail at some point. Therefore, we need a sideshow to distract us from the real reasons why our economic vigor is slipping, and will continue to do so. And since there is little chance for the economy to come back for some time, don't expect *any* war - be it against Iraq, "terrorism" or whoever the next targets are - to be a quick one.

Native Americans

Here's one you probably didn't hear about on the local news: Several weeks ago, Portland, Ore., U.S. District Court Judge John Jelderks rendered an opinion that could ultimately play a crucial role in determining who the first

Americans really were.

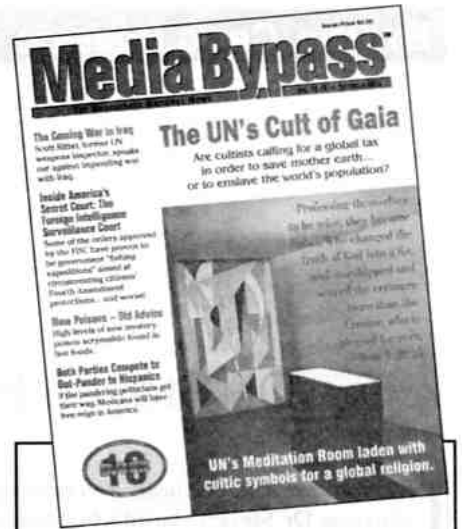
During the Clinton administration, then-Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt gave in to demands of a consortium of American Indian tribes and turned over to them the remains of what has been dubbed Kennewick Man. This nearly in tact skeleton had been unearthed along the Columbia River in Washington State in 1996. The tribes claimed those bones as those of one of their ancestors and objected to any outside, scientific study of the remains.

Radioactive carbon dating suggests that the remains could be some 8,000 years old. Further - and this is key - the characteristics of the skeleton's appearance suggest Kennewick Man was not a relative of these or other American Indian tribes. In rendering his decision, Judge Jelderks, said in favor of eight prominent anthropologists who had been suing for the right to study Kennewick Man, ruled that the remains, since they do not resemble modern "Native Americans" and could not be culturally linked, do not belong to the Indian tribes.

Many of you, as I, live in a part of America where legal and territorial battles are ongoing between those dubbed Native Americans and the rest of us. American Indians, claiming treaty rights based on their presumed status as the first inhabitants of this continent, enjoy certain rights not accorded to other citizens of this country. Some are in the process of attempting to "reclaim" vast amounts of territory from state and local governments. In all of these instances, nerves are being rubbed raw.

Members of the legal profession (and, lest I forget to mention them, many in the so-called "human rights" arenas) have built an entire industry around Native American law and the attendant "rights" American Indians have. It doesn't matter to them that the life of the average Indian on a modern reservation is demeaning, dehumanizing and an embarrassment to our nation. They want to protect their boondoggle at all costs, even if it means covering up the mounting evidence that those called Native Americans are really not that at all.

Hats off to Judge Jelderks, one jurist who apparently understands that the truth - and law - must triumph over politics.



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