

Miscellany 41: Observations since March:

Recent Activities; My Alien Implant; The Bloods and the Crips On My Doorstep; Shock Absorbers: One More Icon of the American System of Waste; The Cost of a Mattress; Bad Peanut Butter Spreads to the Third World; The Benefit of Exercise; Whites Need Not Apply; Natural Cures / Home Remedies; The Rust Destroys the Steel; The Reason for the Obesity Epidemic?; Rewriting American History; George Bush on Climate Change; Nobody's Worth \$200 Million; Nooses?; Immigration Finally Hits Home; No Down Payment Required; US Homes for Illegal Alien Drug Smugglers; The US Home Security Racket; The Illusionist; The High Cost of Knock-Offs; Free Music; No Respect for Ahmadinejad; Children Play Indoors Now; Bad Real Estate Contracts; Whatever Happened to the Greenwich Meridian?; Leprosy Skyrocketing; Not Invented Here; Avoiding a Humanitarian Disaster in Iraq; General David Grange on the Iraq War; Bodies Protected, Faces Ravaged; The Discrediting of Che Guevara; Ann Coulter Interview; Conservation Will Help? Rubbish!; Tesla, Not Marconi, Invented Radio; The White Man's Burden; Georgia Chain Gangs; No One Dresses Up Anymore; Recent Critiques on Religion; Hyperinflation in the US; Neale Donald Walsch Is from Spartanburg; Plans for Coal-Fired Plants Dropped; Hal Lindsey's Prediction about the Demise of Israel; Blue Jeans Are Farmer's Pants; Another Case of Terminal Development; None of the Above: The Democrats Are the Same as the Republicans; What's In a Name, Hillary Clinton; The US Border Fence Should Be Cancelled?

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Commentary on recent news, reading and events of personal interest.

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Recent Activities

I have been very busy recently. I am semi-retired at the current stage of my life, and I enjoy spending my spare time writing. Since March, when I wrote the article about my opinion of the new Microsoft Vista operating system, I have not had a chance to write a single word on my personal items of interest. My schedule looks pretty clear now, however, and I am “back in business.”

I have spent most of the past six months consulting on a job in Honduras, with a few weeks in Guinea. Things are not good in Honduras, and far worse in Guinea. Fifty years ago, Honduras and Guinea were very nice places. Now, after a half-century of “freedom” and “economic development,” they are disaster zones. Guinea is like a scene from Hell – you cannot imagine such squalor unless you see it face to face. Conakry used to be a delightful small town at the end of an archipelago – the “Paris of Africa.” You can't say that anymore. Compared to Guinea, Honduras is a paradise. I spent most of my time in the capital cities (Conakry and Tegucigalpa), and saw the worst of the countries – I am sure that there are still a few delightful spots in each, awaiting “development.”

A friend of mine visited Roatan, in the Bay Islands (Islas de la Bahia). The Bay Islands, just off the north coast of Honduras, are a popular dive spot. My friend had lived in Honduras for three years, a few years ago, and had done SCUBA diving in the Bay Islands at that time. He was appalled at the change since his previous visits. Massive condominiums everywhere, total

destruction of the forest, and severe pollution from runoff into the sea. Another case of “terminal development.”

The worst thing about Honduras is the crime. You used to be able to walk about safely. Not any more. One out of every seven Hondurans now lives in the US. Why? America’s insane “open borders” policy. Before the mass exodus to the US, Honduras was relatively safe. What happened is that many Hondurans got into violent crime in large US cities such as Los Angeles. When they were eventually apprehended by US authorities, they were deported back to Honduras, where they developed similar gangs to those they had joined in the US. Tegucigalpa is now a violent, unsafe place, thanks to US immigration policies.

Last February, my wife and I took a one-week vacation in the Dominican Republic. It was a great deal – an “all inclusive” week at a nice beach resort for only \$750 per person, including air fare from Spartanburg to Santo Domingo. I had previously visited Santo Domingo in 1975, while I was working in Haiti. At that time, Haiti was very safe – a white woman could walk down the darkest street of Port au Prince at night, and have no fear. Now, the level of bloodshed, muggings and kidnappings is extreme. When I visited Santo Domingo, it was a sleepy little town, and the rest of the island was undeveloped. Now, the DR has 60,000 hotel rooms, and “urban blight” is everywhere.

In 1975, I visited a “blue grotto” outside of Santo Domingo. It was totally natural. The grotto that my wife and I visited now, totally surrounded by city, had been outfitted with concrete sidewalks, plumbing-pipe handrails, a gift shop, and a large paved parking lot. It was overrun by tourists. You had to stand in line to see it. Isn’t economic development wonderful? To paraphrase Christopher Hitchens, overpopulation poisons everything.

My Alien Implant

Our flight to Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, left at 8:10 in the morning of February 28 out of Charlotte, North Carolina. Our home, Spartanburg, South Carolina, is about 80 miles south of Douglas Airport, and so, to avoid having to rise so early, we decided to drive to Charlotte on the evening of February 27 and take a motel near the airport. We stayed in room 114 of the Red Roof Inn at 3300 I-85 South, Charlotte.

When I awoke the next morning, while showering, I could not help but notice a large bump on the top of my left forearm. It was slightly itchy, and when I scratched it while on the flight to DR, I made it bleed slightly. It was a noticeable bump, and I showed it to my wife. She was quite surprised. A few weeks later, I had a medical exam (prior to my expected consultancy in Honduras), and I showed the doctor. He had no idea what it was.

From what I read on alien implants, they are often associated with “missing time.” Interestingly, but not surprisingly, I can’t recall a thing about the night in the motel room.

The Bloods and the Crips On My Doorstep

A neighbor of mine told me recently that she had had a discussion with a Spartanburg Country Sheriff’s deputy, who told her that the Bloods and the Crips gangs were now in our area, and

active within a mile of our neighborhood. Why does our government allow this? Why must our neighborhood become an armed camp, simply because our government refuses to take effective action to promote public safety?

Shock Absorbers: One More Icon of the American System of Waste

I had to buy a new car battery the other day, and noticed a sale on shock absorbers. They were about a hundred dollars a pair. When I was a boy, shock absorbers were repairable. You unscrewed the top and put a new washer inside. The cost was negligible. For the economic elite who run the country, however, this is intolerable. It is far better from the viewpoint of generating wealth for the elite to waste the energy required to replace old shock absorbers with new ones, for \$100, than to allow people to rebuild them for \$1.00. At some point, perhaps in the 1950s, shock absorbers became throw-away items. Rebuildable ones were no longer sold.

The Cost of a Mattress

We have two mattresses (plus “box springs / foundations”) in my home. One, in our guest bedroom, is a Simmons Beautyrest mattress that we bought about ten years ago for perhaps two hundred dollars when we owned a condominium in Florida. Our houseguests invariably comment on how comfortable it is. The other is the one in our matrimonial bed. It is 20-35 years old – I either bought it when we moved to Fairfax, Virginia, in 1972 or moved to Sierra Vista, Arizona, in 1986. The brand is “Ethan Allen” – it evidently came with the four-poster bedframe in our guest bedroom. The cost of that mattress (which bears an Ethan Allen label) would have been included in the cost of the bed, and was no doubt far less than \$100. It is still comfortable, but the edges are slightly tapered now, and so my wife and I went shopping for a new one.

How things have changed. For the previous mattresses, the foundation is about 8 inches thick and the mattress about 10 inches thick. For today’s mattresses, the foundation is either 5 inches or nine inches thick (it is now just a frame, without box springs), and the mattress may be 12-18 inches thick. Some mattresses come with a “pillow top,” which is a soft pillow-like top a couple of inches thick, and some come with a top layer of moldable plastic foam that reminds me of silly putty or “plasticene” modeling clay. Some even come with inflatable air bags, for which you can adjust the air pressure and firmness. The cost of the mattresses is about \$1,000 for standard ones of good quality and up to \$3,000 or more for the unusual ones. There were a few models for less, but they were not comfortable.

I find these prices amazing! A standard mattress, in a model that is very comfortable, is a low-tech commodity. It is just some wire surrounded by foam or other padding and cloth. If it cost less than \$100 20-40 years ago, with all of the country’s productivity improvements, it should cost substantially less (in current dollars) now – or at least still be a reasonable-cost item. A good color television set cost about \$300 10-40 years ago, and now costs less than \$100 (recently \$88 for a full-size model at WalMart). A good quality mattress was inexpensive 20-40 years ago, and should be even more inexpensive today. It should cost less than \$100 today, if things made any sense. Furthermore, our old mattress is over 20 years old, and still in quite

good condition – the new mattresses come only with a ten-year warranty, and then only if you purchase both the foundation and the mattress.

So where are they? Where are good quality mattresses for low cost? My wife and I visited four stores on Saturday while shopping for a mattress – a furniture store, Sears, and two “mattress” stores. With the absurd prices of today’s mattresses, it is easy to understand why there are “mattress” stores. The amazing thing is that a good quality mattress, of standard design, can no longer be found for a reasonable price. There is no reason why a low-tech commodity such as a mattress must cost \$1,000 or more. The sad thing is that there appears to be no alternative. US retailers are simply not stocking reasonably priced quality mattresses.

After shopping for a few hours, we ended up purchasing a Stearns and Foster mattress for about \$1,000. It is as comfortable as our old one. Unfortunately, it is so thick (13 inches, rather than the eight inches standard in older mattresses) that my wife cannot lift it to make the bed (tuck in the sheets under the mattress. The fact that the US can no longer produce a quality, thin mattress at low cost is absurd. This is pathetic. It is another indicator showing how our society is headed in the wrong direction – higher cost or lower quality, and always greater expenditure of energy.

This is just one more example of the extreme wastefulness of US society. The cost of an item is pretty much a reflection of the cost of the energy required to produce it. A standard mattress is a low-tech item that can be manufactured for very little cost. Rather than offer a good quality mattress at a low price, however, the US manufacturing and retailing industry offers quality models only for very high prices. The industry is not taking steps to reduce energy consumption (the energy required to produce the product), and it appears strongly that the distribution system is operating in constraint of free trade (the product line at all four stores we visited was very similar).

(The pricing of today’s mattresses is reminiscent of the pricing of Polaroid polarized plastic – it cost virtually nothing to produce very high quality polarized plastic, but the Polaroid company thought that it was a shame to let the public have a good quality product at a reasonable price, so it introduced impurities into most of the production lot and would sell the normal, flawless product only at a high price. Good quality mattresses were available at low cost many years ago, but they are no longer available in the US market.) Capitalism is not serving us well.

The US economy has entered a state of hyperinflation. Prices for consumer goods are skyrocketing. While I was working in Zambia three years ago, I purchased four pairs of eyeglasses (two reading and two long-distance), with imported Italian frames and lenses that darkened in sunlight. The total cost was perhaps USD200. A few months ago I dropped one pair and broke a lens. Last week, I dropped a second pair and broke another lens. Over the past three days I have visited three eyeglass stores (Sears, Walmart and LensCrafters), asking for quotes on replacement of lenses in two of the frames (the same prescription for each pair). I just paid LensCrafters \$469.06 to do this work (similar to the price at Sears and Walmart, but LensCrafters had its own “lab” and could produce the lenses within an hour). Recall that it cost about \$200 for *four* pairs of imported frames and lenses in Zambia – and that the LensCrafters price was for just *two* pairs of lenses, with no frames. Most “western” goods in Zambia cost substantially more than they do in the US. With its touted high level of productivity, the price in the US should have been far less than the price in Zambia. But it was many times greater. What a rip-off!

Last year I purchased a pair of polycarbonate sunglasses in Australia (in the resort section of Darwin) for about USD12 (the price was AUD16.00). At the LensCrafters store today, identical sunglasses sold for \$75 – 200. Today, after some comparison shopping, I paid almost a half-thousand dollars for four replacement lenses worth perhaps \$5. What is going on? Where are all of the excess profits going from these inflated prices? Certainly not to the US middle class that is getting completely ripped off. US productivity increases every year, but the quality of life for the US middle class declines every year. (This is a rhetorical question. The answer is obvious. Because of US policies of open borders and massive international free trade, the US worker is forced to compete with workers around the world making perhaps a dollar a day. The direct result of this policy, now that the US has given its technology to the world, is that the US worker's standard of living must fall to match that of workers around the world. This is the goal of the US government – to destroy the US middle class in order to make billions for the wealthy elite that control the country.)

Bad Peanut Butter Spreads to the Third World

When I was a kid, peanut butter always “separated,” i.e., the peanut oil slowly rose to the top, and it was necessary to stir it from time to time. Then, probably in the 1950s, someone got the bright idea of “hydrogenating” the oil in the peanut butter. Hydrogen gas is bubbled through the oil, and the chemical product that results solidifies at room temperature. This may be very convenient in helping a person to avoid the terrible task of having to stir his peanut butter from time to time, but, unfortunately, hydrogenated vegetable oils are bad for your health – they clog your arteries, they make you very sick, and they kill you.

Of course this doesn't matter much to US industry, or to the US government, which regulates foods. In fact, it helps the country a lot, from an economic viewpoint. It significantly increases the incidence of heart and cardiovascular disease, producing much business for the medical sector and a large boost in gross domestic product.

When I started working in Africa in the early 1990s, I was very happy to see that the local peanut butter was not hydrogenated. “Black Cat” was the most popular brand in Botswana, and I became a loyal customer (I like peanuts and peanut butter, and I eat a lot of both). I enjoyed the pleasure of eating peanut butter that was not bad for my heart and blood vessels, and, evidently, the onerous task of stirring the peanut butter occasionally did not cause any problems with the muscles of my stirring arm.

My wife and I always shopped at stores frequented by “expats,” and British and American brands were always available. Jiff, Skippy and Peter Pan (and sometimes Superman) peanut butter, fully hydrogenated, were always on the shelves. But they were substantially more expensive than Black Cat and the other local brands, which outsold them by a large margin. (You have to pay a lot more for the peanut butter that will clog your heart and veins – how do you figure that one out?) You would not believe how large the containers of Black Cat peanut butter were – you could buy it in five-gallon cans!

A few years ago, I was delighted when Smuckers introduced non-hydrogenated peanut butter, and I have been using it ever since. On my last trip to Africa, however, I was very dismayed to see that Black Cat had now switched to hydrogenation. Africa's poor blacks have just as much a right to clogged arteries as developed-country whites, it would seem. Smuckers nonhydrogenated version was not available. No brand of non-hydrogenated peanut butter was available at all. All brands – local (Black Cat) and imported (Jif, Skippy) were now

hydrogenated. What a shame. Natural food is much better for you and it costs less to produce. But natural food does not generate as much illness as synthetic food, and hence it does not generate as much money for the wealthy elite (especially the medical sector) who run things, and so you will not find much of it on the grocery shelves. It used to be that you could find lots of local, natural foods in the markets of developing countries. But as they “develop,” the availability of low-cost, healthy foods gradually fades away.

(While in Honduras over the past few months, I went to a local grocery store to buy some snacks, always including a loaf of bread and a jar of peanut butter. The local brand was hydrogenated. Jif was available too, and it was, of course, also hydrogenated. On my first trip I tried the local brand, and on my last trip, last week, I tried Jif. When back in my hotel room, I happened to take a look at the Jif label. To my surprise, what I had purchased was not peanut butter at all – it was “peanut butter spread,” containing only 60 percent peanuts and 40 percent soybeans and an assortment of synthetic chemicals. I was surprised to notice that Jif is now owned by Smuckers – the people who also sell the non-hydrogenated peanut butter (at a premium price, of course).)

The Benefit of Exercise

My friend, Sharon, sent me an e-mail a few days ago, containing a list of tongue-in-cheek “health tips.” Two of the funnier ones were:

“The cardiologist’s diet: If it tastes good, spit it out.”

“Walking can add minutes to your life. This enables you at 85 years old to spend an additional 5 months in a nursing home at \$5000 per month.”

Whites Need Not Apply

One of my sons has a serious back condition. As a youth he suffered from Scheurmann’s disease, in which the spine curves forward. A couple of years ago he was diagnosed with ankylosing spondylitis, a severe degenerative form of arthritis of the spinal column. He was in great pain, but the physicians would not prescribe opium-based painkillers. Instead, they prescribed ineffective painkillers at the cost of about \$1,000 per month.

The prognosis was not good. His physician told him that he would end up in a wheelchair within a few years. He might try an operation, but this might lead to total paralysis. At work, he was in agony from the pain, breaking out in a cold sweat. For some months, he received disability payments from his medical insurance through his employer. Eventually, his employer (Intuit) moved his job function to India, and he was terminated. After a few months, the disability coverage terminated. Then his employee’s medical insurance ended.

With no work and no prospects for work with his painful and debilitating condition, he applied for Social Security disability. He was denied. I was amazed at this – I had told him that if anyone deserved Social Security disability, it was he. He was a natural-born US citizen and had worked for many years. What was going on?

I spoke with my brother-in-law, who knows a lot about such matters – he is a CPA and his daughter is a social worker (both in North Carolina – my son lives in Tucson, Arizona). He told me that the problem was his color – white. My brother-in-law explained that if my son were black or brown or Hispanic, he would have been granted the disability for his condition without question. But as a white person, the only way he was going to get disability from the Social Security Administration was by hiring a lawyer and suing them. In North Carolina, the backlog of such cases is in the tens of thousands, and the expected waiting time until resolution of a case is over a year.

Without support, and with a wife and two children to support, my son's problems have worsened. He has lost custody of his two children (my grandchildren), has been beat up by the local police while out of his mind on his pain medication, and was illegally – and “mistakenly” thrown in jail for a long weekend. Without income, he is now losing his house. It appears that, as a white male, our “system” has no way of helping him, and is in fact working hard at making his problems infinitely worse.

Natural Cures / Home Remedies

Home Remedies for Insect Control. Whenever I have a health or insect problem, I try to find a “natural,” environmentally friendly way of addressing it. For example, I have known for many years that if you want to stop ants or cockroaches or other insects from invading your home, simply dust some boric acid powder at the places where they enter (door thresholds, windowsills, wall moldings). The mild acid stings their feet, and they quickly disappear.

I purchased my current home in Spartanburg, South Carolina, a couple of years ago, and I have had three problems in my back yard – fire ants, Japanese beetles, and “black spot” fungus on roses. I could not find any “natural” solution to combat the infestation of fire ant and Japanese beetles (and I mean *infestation* – new fire ant mounds were appearing every few days, and Japanese beetles were swarming in the hundreds and devouring entire plants). In desperation, I started using insecticide for the fire ants and Japanese beetles. I did not want to continue this, because we have several bird feeders in our back yard and I do not want to poison them. Last week, I discovered that a fire-ant mound may be destroyed simply by drowning it with water from the garden hose (this treatment is not totally effective, but it is helpful – it appears to be more effective on small anthills than on large ones). I have not yet found an environmentally friendly solution to the Japanese beetle infestation. I bought some insecticide bags to hang on the infected plants – these worked quite well and kept the insecticide from touching the ground (the beetles fall into the bag), but they are just one more toxic, unsustainable solution. With respect to the rosebushes, I plan to replace them next year with plants that Japanese beetles don't like. The beetles also like my magnolias and an expensive Japanese red-bark maple tree. I don't want to lose them, but as yet I have not found a good solution to the Japanese beetle problem. It would be very nice if some of the birds that feed from my bird feeders liked to eat Japanese beetles.

Brewer's Yeast for Ticks and Fleas. If your dog has a tick or flea problem, mix a dose of brewer's yeast in with his daily meal. It is not totally effective, but it is helpful (I have been told that the ticks don't like the taste of the blood when the dog eats brewer's yeast).

The preceding are a few natural cures for environmental problems. I have come across a number of interesting responses to health conditions. There is a tremendous variation in human response to foods and chemicals, and what works for me does not necessarily work for someone else. [By the way, I am not a licensed health-care provider, and I am not making any recommendations for treatment of any kind. I am simply reporting on my own personal experience or opinions and what I have read about a number of problems of personal interest to me. If you have a health problem, consult a licensed health-care practitioner. Do not try any of the remedies suggested below on your own – consult a licensed professional. As the label on one of my vitamin-pill bottles states, after claiming all sorts of health benefits: “These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.” Moreover, my personal experience represents a sample of one, namely, yours truly, and not a “scientifically designed experiment.”]

Sodium Bicarbonate (“Baking Soda”) to Stop Incipient Colds and Sore Throats. While I was living in Zambia a few years ago, someone told me that if I feel that I have a cold or sore throat coming on, take a teaspoonful of baking soda (sodium bicarbonate) in a glass of water, and the problem will be resolved quickly. I have now tried this many times, and it works very well – all symptoms disappear within an hour or so. I wish I could remember who told me this, so that I could thank her. (I used to suck a solution of salt or sodium bicarbonate through my nose at the onset of a sore throat or cold. That is of little help in stopping sore throats or colds, but it can help to clear out your sinus cavities. Also, taking massive doses of vitamin C, as recommended by Nobel laureate chemist Linus Pauling, is useless.)

Frozen-Shoulder Treatment with a Copper Bracelet. While in Botswana (1999-2001), I developed a “frozen” shoulder (for no apparent reason – no injury or unusual strain or physical activity). It did not hurt when not in use, but if I tried to do even the simplest thing, such as roll up a car window, the pain was substantial. I could not raise my arm above shoulder level. This condition went on for some months, and I tried a number of treatments, including glucosamine and chondroitin sulfate and heat. Nothing worked.

In a golf shop one day, I noticed a copper bracelet, recommended to alleviate golf aches and pains. I decided to give it a try. After a week, I thought that the pain was lessening. Within six weeks, the pain was gone, and I had regained complete mobility of the arm. After a few weeks, I decided to try to dispense with the bracelet. After about a week, my shoulder started feeling “funny,” and so I put the bracelet on and have worn it ever since.

I told a physician about my experience, and he laughed it off. My next door neighbor in Botswana also tried it for joint pain, with complete success. He told me that he had read that the copper changes the level of uric acid in the body, and that uric acid can cause joint pain. My son-in-law also used it with success.

(On my physician’s response – don’t trust everything modern science tells you. After many years of mammograms, it was discovered that they had caused more breast cancer than they had helped cure from early identification. My mother recently had a bout with polymyalgia rheumatica. It was totally misdiagnosed, based on standard blood tests, by a licensed physician (in a group practice). After three months of pain she changed physicians. The new physician trusted his judgment more than the blood tests, and agreed that the condition was very likely polymyalgia rheumatica. He began the standard treatment, and she gradually recovered.)

Restless Leg Syndrome. Restless leg syndrome (RLS) is caused by diet, such as consuming monosodium glutamate (MSG), a popular flavor enhancer. In fact, MSG is so notorious as a

cause of RLS that RLS used to be called “Chinese Food Syndrome.” Rather than effect a cure by identifying the offending component of one’s diet, the standard approach of modern medicine is to prescribe expensive and dangerous drugs, such as Mirapex (pramipexole).

Potassium Sorbate Reaction. Potassium sorbate, a common preservative in many soft drinks, fruit juices and mixers, can cause severe reactions, ranging from chest pain and difficulty in breathing to death. If you ever have this sort of reaction after drinking apple juice, wine coolers, daiquiris, or piña coladas, start reading ingredient labels.

Garlic and Mosquitoes. Some people attract mosquitoes, and some people don’t. If you are one of the latter, then eating a clove of raw garlic each day can effectively reduce your attractiveness to mosquitoes. The quinine in tonic water (quinine water, the mixer for gin-and-tonic) is also helpful in reducing susceptibility to malaria.

Chocolate and Headaches; Potassium Metabisulfite and Headaches. Severe headaches can be caused by chocolate and potassium metabisulfite (a preservative added to many wines). Reducing chocolate intake and using wines having no sulfites added (or treated only with sulfur dioxide) can eliminate these headaches.

For me, the headache from wine starts the following day about midmorning, and it lasts for two days. One glass of wine is all it takes. The headache is not severe, but it is sufficient to put a real damper on things. It is always behind my right eye. The headache is something to be avoided. Here are some of the things that can be done. (1) Don’t drink any wine (not a very good solution). (2) Only drink wine that is advertised as “No sulfites added”; the variety of such wines is quite limited and they are often expensive, so this is also not a good solution; (3) While in countries such as Australia, that produce lots of good wine without potassium metabisulfite, drink up!; (4) Add a capful of hydrogen peroxide to a glass of wine, just before drinking it; (5) Use wines that have high alcohol content, such as 14 percent (these wines need less preservatives); (6) Drink a large glass of water before retiring at night; (7) If a wine tastes harsh, don’t drink it; (8) Try carbonated wines such as champagne (they seem to give me fewer headaches); (9) Drink wine only occasionally, such as when dining out (the preservative seems to be cumulative – if I drink only one glass every few weeks, I rarely get a headache from the wine).

From my experience, it seems that my headaches are not caused by the fusil oil in wine.

Some beers in developing countries give me the same headache as I get with wine. I have been told that it is because of formaldehyde. I never get headaches from drinking beers made in compliance with the German Reinheitsbegot (Purity Law), such as all German beers and many other beers from Europe (e.g., Holland, Austria, Czech Republic).

Caffeine and Heart Palpitations. Caffeinated soft drinks and tea can cause heart palpitations. (These can last all night long and through much of the next day.)

Soft Drinks and Halitosis. Drinking several Coca Colas a day over an extended period can cause severe chronic halitosis (“bad breath”).

Leg Cramps. If the level of potassium in your body is too low or too high, you can develop severe leg cramps. There is a myth that if you experience leg cramps while running, then your potassium level may be too low, and eating bananas may help. This is not correct. If the potassium level is *either* too low or too high, cramps may result. It may be that eating bananas

may *cause* cramps. I discovered this the hard way. When I was younger, I used to jog about twenty minutes each day (and later, every other day) for one or two months each year. While living in Tucson, Arizona, I had bad problems in cramping after running a mile or so. I ate bananas. Nothing happened – no improvement. I consulted a physician, who suggested that I take a diuretic. This reduced the level of potassium in my body, and the cramps immediately stopped. Even today, if I eat more than one banana a day, my legs will likely cramp at night.

Other cures for leg cramps at night are to drink a large glass of water before going to bed, and make sure that your legs stay warm (i.e., under the sheets / blankets). The customary practice of stretching before running does not work for me to prevent cramping.

Menière's Syndrome. I used to suffer from Menière's syndrome. Menière's syndrome is the following three symptoms, with unknown etiology: (1) tinnitus (noise in your ear(s) similar to the noise of a conch shell); (2) immediate and severe attacks of vertigo (intense dizziness, to the point where you may fall over and become very nauseous, to the point of vomiting); (3) deafness, which may be temporary or permanent. It turns out the if you dramatically reduce your salt intake, you may be able to reduce the severity and frequency of the attacks. This worked rather well, but not perfectly, for me. (My attacks stopped completely only after my affected (left) ear went stone deaf (except for the constant loud tinnitus, which continues unabated.)

Periodontal Disease. Gingivitis and pyorrhea (now called periodontal disease) can be slowed or stopped by use of baking soda (sodium bicarbonate), in brushing, flossing, or "Water-Piking."

Coffee and Colitis. I know from personal experience that coffee (not caffeine – coffee) can cause colitis. I never drank coffee until I did some work in Haiti in 1975-76, and was served strong Haitian coffee in demitasses every couple of hours in the Ministry of Agriculture. I had never liked coffee before, because, in the US, it was "harsh." This coffee, however, was smooth and delicious. It did not need any sugar or milk to soften it and make it taste good. Right away, I was hooked.

After I returned to the US, I started looking for good coffee. I found a few good brands, such as Tasters Choice and Yuban. I never drank much – just one cup in the morning to "perk me up." It really does give you a slight lift. Not much, but enough to make a difference. A little boost of energy, that made you feel more awake and energetic.

During my visit to Haiti, I contracted "traveler's diarrhea." Unfortunately, even after I returned to the US for good, it never completely went away. It would improve some, but was chronic. After several months I visited a physician and underwent many tests, even including X-rays (after drinking barium) on a fancy tomography machine that whirled around in the air. No solution was ever found. The doctor called it "irritable bowel syndrome," or "colitis." I found that by taking a dose of Metamucil (psyllium) I could ameliorate the symptoms.

After a few years, the problem was more than simple diarrhea. I would wake up at about three in the morning with a pain in my colon. Sometimes it was mild. Sometimes it hurt so that I would stand up beside the bed for a while. I had a colonoscopy, and got a clean bill of health (this was many years before Katie Couric, and the cost was just a few hundred dollars – now that colonoscopy is popular, this diagnostic procedure costs thousands of dollars). The severity of the problem varied from gone to irritating, but never went away for good.

Seventeen years later, in 1992, my wife and I were visiting my mother and father in Spartanburg, prior to departing for a long-term assignment in Malawi. Mother is not a coffee drinker. She was raised in Canada, and drinks tea. Bless her soul, but her coffee was terrible. It was the standard American “harsh” product that had never attracted me. So I didn’t drink any. After ten days, wonder of wonders, my chronic diarrhea was gone! The colitis was gone. The pain was gone. Some time later Mother read an article in the paper (Dr. Donohue’s column) that coffee can cause colitis. It is a shame that none of the medical doctors that I consulted about my problem thought to ask me about my coffee consumption.

I still enjoy coffee, but drink a cup only every few days.

Effective Treatment of Osteoarthritis. During my college years, I ran cross-country for one year. I enjoyed it, but I wasn’t very good at it. At Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie Mellon University), sports were not emphasized, however, so the competition was not very strong and I came in fifth on the team and was awarded a varsity “letter” (and a very nice wool sweater to wear it on) at the end of the year. I would have continued in the program, but family responsibilities prevented it. (Carnegie Tech used to be a football powerhouse – it has a winning average against Notre Dame, back in the days when Notre Dame was also a football powerhouse.)

Through the rest of my life, I continue to run, to keep in shape. (I say “run,” but “jog” is more descriptive – I don’t run fast.) Running is rather boring, however, and I did it for about six weeks each spring. In 1997, at age 55, when I was living in Charlotte, NC, I would wake up in about three o’clock at night with aching hips, and so I started running only every other day. That worked well.

I continued this regimen until 2000, when I was living in Botswana. I had a large home and would run in large circles in my back yard. At age 58, however, it seems that my body was gradually wearing out. Even though I would run every other day, my hips would ache in the early morning, and so I gave up running completely. This was with some regret, since in my later years this had been my only exercise. (While a young man, I had done many active sports, including water-skiing, snow-skiing, tae kwon do, jiu-jitsu, and fencing. I also did much of the yard work at my home. For thirteen years I served as a scoutmaster or assistant scoutmaster with our church’s Boy Scout troop. We went on a camping trip each month, and always did a 10-mile hike with full packs.)

About a year ago, I started having pain in my hips every night. It would start – a dull and increasing ache – about the middle of the night (3 am), whenever I was lying on my side, and was worse if my top leg slid down over the bottom leg. Lying on my stomach helped some, and lying on my back caused the pain to stop entirely. The problem is that I cannot sleep on my back (the soft tissue at the back roof of my mouth closes my breathing passage, waking me up immediately) or stomach (the blood circulation in my arms stops, and they “go to sleep”). Every night, the pain would wake me up. My hips also bothered me if I would sit still for a long time, such as in a movie or on an airplane.

I had tried glucosamine and chondroitin compounds (sulfate / hydrochloride) for a frozen shoulder in Botswana, and they were of no help, and so I did not try them again. When I mentioned my hip problem to my sister, she enthusiastically encouraged me to try them again. I purchased a bottle of glucosamine and chondroitin sulfate pills. The pills also contained methylsulfonylmethane (MSM) – something new I hadn’t heard about before. I took the pills for a couple of weeks (only one pill a day, not the three per day recommended), but they began to

give me heartburn, and nothing had changed with my hip problem, and so I stopped. My sister suggested that I had not taken them for a long enough time, and that I should try them for at least a month. I took some Prilosec to reduce my stomach's production of hydrochloric acid, and, after the 14-day Prilosec regimen, resumed the glucosamine / chondroitin / MSM regimen once again. After a few weeks, the hip pain started to reduce. I don't like to take pills at all, and definitely not on a continuing basis, and so I stopped taking the pills, even though my hips were improving (despite the Prilosec, they were still causing some heartburn). After a few more weeks, the pain ceased completely, and it has never returned.

I have a very large library – thousands of books and documents, many of which I have not read. In looking through the “health” section of my library this morning, I noticed the book, *The Arthritis Cure*, by Jason Theodosakis, Brenda Adderly and Barry Fox (St. Martin's Press, 1997). I leafed through it and saw that it promoted the use of glucosamine and chondroitin (in various forms) to cure osteoarthritis. Here is a paragraph from the introduction by Amal Das:

“Excited to learn about the European success with glucosamine and chondroitin sulfate, I cautiously began to give them to my patients who were not able to tolerate nonsteroidal antiinflammatory medications because of their side effects. [JGC Note: *One of these products, ibuprofen, almost killed my wife – she is now in 4th stage renal disease (the stage just before you require kidney dialysis).*] These were patients who had few treatment alternatives. One patient with chronic pain in her hip, whose X rays demonstrated severe osteoarthritis, was contemplating hip replacement surgery. After taking glucosamine and chondroitin sulfate, her pain and disability had decreased significantly and she as yet has not required the surgery. Other patients suffering from severe osteoarthritis reported similar results, so I began to expand the indications of these two substances. I've been using glucosamine and chondroitin sulfate for two years now. My patients and I are gratified at the positive results.

“American physicians have been criticized for their failure to use glucosamine and chondroitin sulfates. But American physicians are reluctant to use anything not proven effective in American studies, and the European data has not yet been duplicated in the United States. Why haven't there been American studies on these substances? Great question. As you'll learn from reading this book, it all boils down to money. Glucosamine and chondroitin sulfates, both natural substances, cannot be given the financial protection of a patent, so the drug companies lack financial incentives to promote them. And so the story of these two promising ‘osteoarthritis therapies’ has not yet been told here in the United States.”

I am convinced that the glucosamine / chondroitin cured my hip problem. (Perhaps the MSM helped – I have no way of knowing.) The pain was sufficiently annoying that eventually I suspect that I would have asked my doctor about treatment, which would doubtless have meant hip-joint replacement. A friend of mine, John, had his joints replaced a few years ago. After a couple of years, one pulled out, and he had to have the operation repeated. The second one also pulled out after a year or so. The hip-joint-replacement operation caused him much trouble and pain. I am very pleased that I have been able to solve my hip problem with a simple “home remedy.” This past weekend I started jogging again in the morning. So far, so good – no pain or discomfort at all.

(By the way, before the advent of chondroitin and glucosamine, a number of books had been written on “home-remedy” treatment of arthritis. Three of these are *Folk Medicine* by D. C. Jarvis (Fawcett / Crest, 1958), *Arthritis and Folk Medicine* by D. C. Jarvis (Fawcett / Crest, 1960) and *There Is a Cure for Arthritis* by Paavo O. Airolo (Parker Publishing Company, 1968). These books contain useful tips, but it seems clear that chondroitin and glucosamine are far

more effective than other remedies. From personal experience, I know that the “honey and vinegar” regimen is not effective for everyone. I am an “acidic”-type person. My stomach produces much hydrochloric acid. I don’t need any more acid. If I use much lemon juice in iced tea, it causes me problems. The thing that is not generally realized is that there is a wide range of variation in response to foods and chemicals by human beings. What may work well for one type (e.g., an “acidic” type person, such as I) does not necessarily work well for another. Vinegar and honey do little for me, evidently because I am “acidic.” Baking soda works wonders for me, for example, but may not work well for some (“basic”) people.)

Toenail Fungus. Rigorous hygiene (clean socks every day, or more frequently in humid conditions; no shoes and socks at all when practical; vigorous brushing of toes with soap and a nail-brush), cut back infected toenail and treat daily with a fungicide (e.g., miconazole nitrate (e.g., Micatin), tolnaftate (e.g., Tinactin), clotrimazole (e.g., Lotrimin)).

Be Wary of Hydrocortisone. Before using any remedy, it is important to know what your problem is. A medical doctor is your best source for information, but, they are not always right and they are not always available (e.g., if you are traveling in Africa). Be very careful in using hydrocortisone, a steroid cream. Last year while working in East Timor, I contracted ringworm from inadequately laundered towels (the hotel did its laundry by hand). I thought that I had an insect bite, and to stop the itch I put on some hydrocortisone. The rash spread rapidly, and turned a nasty color of red. I then contacted a medical doctor, who thought that the rash looked like ringworm. I was surprised at this because I had ringworm once as a kid, and it makes a perfect ring. He advised no treatment for a few days, and the problem got no worse. He then advised using a fungicide, such as miconazole nitrate. This cleared up the problem in a few days. Putting hydrocortisone on a fungus is like adding fertilizer to a garden, or gasoline to a fire – it makes the fungus grow like mad.

By the way, a safer and much more effective treatment (than hydrocortisone) for insect bites is benzocaine (e.g., SolarCaine, Lanacane).

Niacin for Healthy Skin. When I had my first attack of Menière’s syndrome in 1967, the doctor prescribed nicotinic acid, or niacin (vitamin B3). Niacin is a “vasodilator” – it makes your capillaries expand. For several minutes, you “flush” – you turn bright red and feel very itchy perhaps just on your face and perhaps all over your body. Menière’s syndrome is an inner-ear problem, and the theory is that disturbing the inner ear with niacin might help. It turns out that the niacin did not help my Menière’s syndrome at all, but I certainly remembered its flushing effect. It is best not to take much niacin, or for an extended period of time (e.g., more than a few days), since it is toxic and may damage the liver.

A number of years later, I read where niacin is very effective in repairing skin damage from overexposure to sun. The treatment is to take it for a number of days, and look each day for “patterns” in the red flush that the niacin causes. It is said that you can see the pattern of severe sunburn from decades earlier, still “memorized by,” or “imprinted on,” or “burned into” your skin. After several days, the patterns gradually disappear, at which point your skin is “repaired.” I take niacin for several days each year. My skin is in very good shape. (By the way, if you wish to take niacin for skin treatment, make sure you buy the “flushing” kind, not the non-flushing (“controlled release” or “timed release” or “slow release”) kind. Also, it appears to have a cumulative effect. When I have not taken it for a while, I can take up to half a pill or a whole pill (where 1 pill = 250 mg). After a few days, a quarter-tablet is sufficient to cause a flush. I have never taken it for more than a week, once every six months or year.)

While my brother was visiting me in Zambia a few years ago, while we were having breakfast, he noticed a bottle of niacin on the table. I told him that I took it to promote healthy skin, and repair damage from the sun. He decided to try a tablet, and I warned him that it would cause him to flush. By “flush,” he thought that I meant that it would act as a laxative. He did not suspect that it would cause him to immediately have a strong, itchy rash – a quite different meaning of the word, “flush.” He immediately thought that he has having a bad allergic reaction, and I reassured him that it did exactly the same thing to me – it made me “flush,” as I had just warned him. Given the immediacy and the severity of the reaction, this clarification was very well received.

Petroleum Jelly and Mineral Oil for Dry Skin. If you move to a dry climate, or to a very cold one in winter (where home heating will cause the relative humidity to be low), the skin on your lips, elbows, heels and soles may dry and crack. A very effective treatment is petroleum jelly. After several days of treatment, the problem is gone. If you have dry skin all over, petroleum jelly is not a very good solution, because it is so greasy. I have found that mineral oil works better in this case. Even regular mineral oil (the same as is used as a stool softener) is rather greasy, but Johnson’s Baby Oil is very light and pleasant to use. If your dry skin is cracked and sore in places, use a “triple antibiotic” ointment for a few days, to clear up possible infection.

For a while, I used Vaseline Intensive Care hand and body lotion for my hands, every time after washing, to prevent dryness. At some point, I developed an allergy to one of the many chemicals in this product (and similar products, such as Lubriderm) – just touching it to my skin would cause my eyes to itch. I have never had any reaction to petroleum jelly or mineral oil. (It is difficult to determine which of the many chemicals in foods or lotions causes allergic reactions. The list of ingredients of Vaseline Intensive Care Aloe Cool and Fresh Light Moisturizing Lotion, for example, is: water, glycerin, stearic acid, glycol stearate, isopropyl palmitate, petrolatum, aloe barbadensis (aloe vera) leaf juice, cucumis sativus (cucumber) extract, helianthus heliuss (sunflower) seed oil or glycine soya (soybean) oil, glycine soya (soybean) sterol, sodium stearyl-2-lactylate, tocopheryl acetate (vitamin E acetate), retinyl palmitate (vitamin A palmitate), sodium acrylate/acryloyldimethyl taurate copolymer, dimethicone, glyceryl stearate, cetyl alcohol, lecithin, mineral water, sodium PCA, potassium lactate, lactic acid, collagen amino acids, urea, fragrance, triethanolamine, DMDM hydantoin, iodopropynyl butylcarbamate, disodium EDTA, titanium dioxide (CI 77891). The list of ingredients for Lubriderm Daily Moisture Lotion for Normal to Dry Skin Fragrance Free is: water, mineral oil, petrolatum, sorbitol solution, stearic acid, lanolin, lanolin alcohol, cetyl alcohol, glyceryl stearate / PEG-100 stearate, triethanolamine, dimethicone, propylene glycol, microcrystalline wax, tri (PPG-3) myristyl ether) citrate, disodium EDTA, methylparaben, ethylparaben, propylparaben, xanthan gum, butylparaben, and methyldibromo glutaronitrile. With so many similar compounds in both products, it is not possible to deduce which one of them is causing the problem.)

In addition to using mineral oil to treat dry skin dryness, make sure you are not exacerbating the problem with harsh bath soaps. Try using mild ones containing few chemical additives, such as Ivory or Johnson’s Baby Soap.

Humidifier and Air Purifiers to Alleviate Dryness and Allergies. In dry climates (or in cold climates during winter, when the home heating lowers the relative humidity), you may find your nasal passages drying out, making you much more susceptible to sore throats. Installing a humidifier on your furnace will help tremendously. If this is not possible (e.g., in a building using a forced air heating system over which you have no control), then running a humidifier all night

long in your bedroom can work wonders. If you suffer from mild allergies that cause nasal “stuffiness,” running an air purifier all night long in your bedroom can also help a lot.

Hair Dressing. Johnson’s Baby Oil. Strong solution of fermented (black) tea (e.g., lapsang oolong) applied topically (contains tannin) for dressing (will shade white hair slightly blonde). If you wear white underclothing, then use of this hair dressing, in addition to keeping your hair in place, will allow you to subscribe to the Bible’s admonition to “always wear white, and anoint your head with oil” (Ecclesiastes 9:8)

You Are What You Eat. If you have a mysterious health ailment, there is a very good chance that you have caused it yourself, by ingesting today’s chemical-rich foods. If you wish to try to determine the cause, try switching to an all-organic diet for a few weeks. (Don’t discount the value of medical checkups, but they are much better in identifying signs such as abnormal levels of body chemicals than in identifying the source (cause) of symptoms or signs such as chemical imbalances.) In today’s world, this will mean preparing your meals at home, since you have no control over what a restaurant uses for ingredients. Drink plenty of water. Don’t drink coffee. Drink tea only in moderate amounts. Use garlic (a natural antibiotic) for flavoring, if you like it. If you consume alcohol, limit it to a pint of German beer per day. Avoid foods heavy in fats and oils (e.g., fat-fried foods). Read the labels on everything you eat or drink, and don’t eat or drink anything that sounds synthetic / artificial. If your symptoms disappear, then you have good reason to suspect that it is something that you are eating that is causing your problem.

If the above doesn’t help, then try switching to a vegetarian diet – animal fats are known to be responsible or exacerbate lots of health problems.

Hemorrhoids. Rigorous hygiene and petroleum jelly can be very effective. Hemorrhoids are much more easily prevented than cured. If you eat a lot of animal flesh and fat (which can contribute to hard stools, constipation, straining, and hemorrhoids), try switching to a mainly vegetarian diet, or take psyllium (Metamucil) with meals.

Erectile Dysfunction / Penis Enlargement. I am amazed at how many “spam” e-mails I receive advertising cures for erectile dysfunction (“ED”), or for penis enlargements. These ads are total scams. The problems are real, but there is no need to take expensive drugs such as Viagra or Cialis to treat them. There is a very effective manual-therapy cure for both of these conditions.

The Rust Destroys the Steel

My Filipina friend, Anna, once quoted the Filipino saying, “The rust destroys the steel.”

The Reason for the Obesity Epidemic?

Recently I read three interesting books recently on natural cures and weight loss. They are:

1. *The Weight Loss Cure “They” Don’t Want You to Know About* by Kevin Trudeau (Alliance Publishing Group, 2007)
2. *Natural Cures “They” Don’t Want You to Know About* by Kevin Trudeau (Alliance Publishing Group, 2004)

3. *More Natural Cures Revealed* by Kevin Trudeau (Alliance Publishing Group, 2006)

The thesis of the first book is that America's obesity epidemic is being caused not by the amount that people are eating, but by the type of food that they are eating. The author, Kevin Trudeau, promotes the thesis that it is the massive ingestion of chemicals and processed foods that is upsetting normal body metabolism, and causing the massive epidemic of obesity we see today.

When I was a boy, obesity was very rare. It was so rare that if you went to the circus, you would invariably see a "fat lady" on display. There might be a fat child in your school or in your classroom, but obesity was present in a tiny minority of children. Now, you see fat and obese people in large numbers everywhere you go.

Trudeau cites research done by a British physician, Dr. A. T. W. Simeons, and presented in *Pounds and Inches: A New Approach to Obesity* (available on the internet at <http://www.hcgdietinfo.com/Dr-ATW-Simeons-Pounds-and-Inches.htm>). To follow Simeons' "weight loss cure protocol," it is necessary to stop eating highly processed and chemically laden food. Today, this is very difficult. Most supermarket foods are both highly processed and chemical-laden. So are most restaurant foods. To follow this regimen, it would be necessary to purchase unprocessed foods and prepare them at home. I tried to follow the prescribed diet for a few days, but it was causing stress for my wife, who prepares all of the meals. I started reading ingredient labels on foods, however, and I was reminded of the massive amounts of synthetic chemicals in our supermarket foods.

In view of the fact that Americans are eating food quite different from that that they "evolved" on, it is not surprising that strange results would occur. Human beings cannot be healthy on unhealthy diets. The diabetes epidemic in American Indians is a stunning example of the damage caused by an unhealthy diet.

By the way, another very interesting book on food is *The Food Revolution: How Your Diet Can Help Save Your Life and Our World*, by John Robbins (son of the founder of the world's largest ice-cream company, Baskin and Robbins Ice Cream) (Conan Press, 2001). Also, see his *Diet for a New America* (Starseed Press, 1998). Since my wife has a weight problem, I have read a number of diet books. If you read only two books on diet / food, Robbins' are the best ones to read.

Rewriting American History

I never cease to be amazed at the extent to which the founders of America are being systematically erased from our cultural memory. My wife and I attended the wedding of a friend in the Washington, DC, area recently, and spent an extra day sightseeing. One of the places that we visited was the National Archives. In the flyer describing the National Archives ("Who Will You Discover at the National Archives Experience?"), the only name mentioned in the entire flyer is that of Martin Luther King, Jr. ("Special documents such as the Magna Carta are on display while others such as the Emancipation Proclamation and those revealing the lives of great Americans like Martin Luther King, Jr., are rotated throughout the year."). If I had to mention the name of only one American, it would be George Washington or Thomas Jefferson, or possibly Benjamin Franklin. Martin Luther King Jr. is a moral reprobate who shamelessly promoted improvement of the status of a small minority of the American people, late in the

country's history. It is not only a poor but ridiculous choice as a representative example of what the National Archives holds. It is but one more example of the growing drive to erase white Protestants from the cultural history of the United States. (Even Abraham Lincoln would have been a superior choice to King. Although Lincoln (illegally) freed slaves in Southern states, many of today's US blacks believe that it was King who freed the slaves – an egregious example of how far cultural revisionism has progressed in the US.)

George Bush on Climate Change

On September 28, 2007, US President George W. Bush stated that the US now accepted that climate change was occurring, and that the US would take steps to mitigate it, so long as that did not interfere with economic growth. This is one of the silliest statements I have ever heard.

Nobody's Worth \$200 Million

On September 6, 2007, it was announced that McDonald's Corporation (the hamburger restaurant chain) had lost a lawsuit involving a fraudulent strip search of one of its employees, Louise Ogborn. Miss Ogborn had filed a \$200 million lawsuit against McDonald's for being forced to strip in a restaurant office. What prompted the suit was that someone called the restaurant in Mount Washington, Kentucky, impersonating a police officer and gave a description of a young, female employee, accusing her of stealing from a customer. The hoax caller requested that an employee search the woman.

Ogborn was awarded \$5 million in punitive damages and just over \$1.1 million in compensatory damages, for a total of \$6.1 million. Commenting on the award, Juror Kay Parrish told reporters that the award would enable Ogborn to live well the rest of her life and put the incident behind her. "There's nobody in the world worth \$200 million," she remarked. Amen.

Nooses?

In the news recently, there is a lot of talk about nooses, and that displaying them represents a racial slur against US blacks, since many of them were lynched by hanging. This is something new. In all my life, there was no connotation at all associated with nooses. The US black-promotion movement has hijacked a neutral symbol, and given it a new meaning. It is rumored that some people want to make displaying a noose a "hate crime." Oh, my.

Immigration Finally Hits Home

I have been writing for a number of years on the fact that mass immigration is destroying US land and US culture. Until recently, I have been "blowing in the wind" – it seemed that no one was listening.

There are now an estimated 400,000 Mexican immigrants in South Carolina, where I now live. Most of them are illegal aliens.

I realized that other people were finally beginning to take notice of the mass immigration when my brother in law, who was born here and lived here most of his life, mentioned to me that immigration is all of a sudden a major topic of conversation in his morning coffee klatch.

No Down Payment Required

When I returned from Africa a couple of years ago, I sold my condominium in Clearwater, Florida, and relocated to Spartanburg, South Carolina. Florida was a beautiful, rural state when I first lived there in 1953. Its population then was about 2 million people. Because of mass immigration, it now has a population of about 16 million. It has been totally “Californicated” – urban sprawl is everywhere, and the high quality of life I once knew has disappeared. Because of the poor quality of life, many people are now leaving Florida, such as I did. Unfortunately, many of them are moving to South Carolina, causing much urban sprawl here, also. Many of the people leaving Florida were originally from the North. Since they are moving halfway back to the North, they are referred to as “halfbacks.”

Yesterday, I purchased some replacement lenses for my eyeglasses. The salesperson who helped me was born and raised in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. In 1989 he became so distressed over the destruction of Florida by overpopulation that he asked his employer to relocate him as far away from Florida as he could. He is now living in the town of Greer (near my hometown of Spartanburg).

In Spartanburg I purchased a home in a new development, for a very reasonable price. At this stage of my life, semi-retired and with no children living at home, I do not need a large or expensive home. While we were house-shopping, my wife and I noticed that everywhere, you could buy a home for no money down. This was absolutely amazing to us. When we were young, you needed to put up a 25 percent down payment for a commercial home mortgage and about 5 percent for a government-insured (“FHA”) mortgage. A sizable down payment was required and reasonable to protect the lender. Another rule of thumb imposed by lenders was that the price of the home should not be double your income, after “discretionary” expenses (such as monthly payments for cars and major appliances). These rules avoided the problem of people buying homes that they could not afford.

How things have changed! Evidently, there are now federal programs that allow lower- and middle-income people to purchase homes with no money down. The problem is that many of the people now buying homes are not financially responsible and do not have the financial capacity to carry a home mortgage. In our neighborhood, there has been a number of people who have moved into new homes with no money down, been unable to pay the mortgage, and have lost the homes to foreclosure. In my day, if a person could not save a down payment for a home or a car or an appliance, he could not purchase it. That rational approach seems to have gone the way of the dodo bird. If you have to put a lot of your hard-earned savings into a house as a down payment, you are unlikely to jeopardize it by purchasing a more expensive house than you can afford. Also, if your income is unstable, you may avoid purchasing a home at all. If you can buy a new home no money down, you have no equity in it and will not worry much about losing it.

The no-down-payment phenomenon is evidently not peculiar to South Carolina. It is a national phenomenon, and it has caused a serious problem. It appears that millions of people are living in homes that they cannot afford. Why is it that the federal government, which is responsible for regulating the financial and securities markets, has allowed this to happen? It is the same sort of scandal that happened a few years ago when the government failed to regulate the savings and loan industry. Because of a lack of responsible federal oversight, it was on the verge of collapse. The government did not want to see the wealthy elite lose much money, and so they stepped in to cover massive industry losses. It did the same thing for the derivatives industry (e.g., the Long-Term Capital Management fiasco). But who pays for this? Where does the money come to cover the massive losses to avoid financial collapses allowed by – caused by – government irresponsibility? You do. You pay. The US middle class pays. Taxes go up. The wealthy elite lose nothing. The government simply raises your taxes and you pay.

The government has no business passing laws and introducing regulations or programs that enable unqualified people to move into new homes, with the resulting loss paid for by the US middle class taxpayer. It is one more example of the US government's war on the middle class.

The US government has encouraged selling houses for no money down to help “pump up” a flagging economy, and support ever-continuing home building. Now that the housing market has collapsed, it is planning to invest billions to save the investors (big banks and investment houses). But what about the poor suffering bastard who was seduced into buying a house he couldn't afford, and is now losing it due to foreclosure? None of this money is going to him. He will not get to remain in his home. Of course not. The rescue is only intended for the wealthy elites. Their losses will be covered from taxes on the middle class. Screw the middle class for the benefit of the rich. Save the fat cats who invested in imprudent mortgages by forcing the middle class to pay for this stupid policy, just as it did in the Savings and Loan Scandal and the Long Term Capital Management scandal. That is now the American way. The US government has turned against the middle class. It serves only the wealthy elite. The America that was founded by our forefathers no longer exists.

In many cases the foreclosed homes will remain empty, after the hapless mortgagees are evicted. From the government's viewpoint, that is fine. That is in fact exactly what it wants. It wants these homes to remain unoccupied, so that it is necessary to build more new ones. At this very moment, the US government is making plans to start a program to build 1.5 million new housing units over the next 10 years (this was published about October 20 in the Spartanburg Herald-Journal). The program is to be funded by increasing mortgage interest rates on federally guaranteed mortgages by 1-2 percent. Once again, the middle class will pay for this program, entirely. Incidentally, the government spokesperson stated that this will not cause anyone's mortgage to increase. What a boldface lie! Every federally guaranteed mortgage in the future will increase by this amount!

US Homes for Illegal Alien Drug Smugglers

My wife's hairdresser had an interesting tale to tell recently. After a lifetime of working and saving, she and her husband were finally able to sell their home of many years for \$80,000, and buy the home of their dreams. At the closing, they met the purchaser of their old home. He was a young kid – a Mexican who could barely speak English. When the lawyer asked him what bank he would be using for the financing, the kid blurted out “No bank, no bank!” He then pulled a wad of 100-dollar bills from his pocket and counted out \$80,000 in cash.

It is a sad day for America when the government allows thousands of illegal aliens, drug dealers and other criminals into the country, and provides them with the opportunities and the wherewithal to immediately acquire what honest, hardworking Americans must earn with a lifetime of hard work.

The US Home Security Racket

When my wife and I lived in Africa, we always had a security service. For perhaps \$50 per month (I don't recall the exact amount), a firm would outfit our home with a radio transmitter and station armed guards all night long through out the town. These guards could respond with force (guns) within minutes of being summoned by radio.

When I was young, personal security was not a concern in most of the US. While growing up in Spartanburg, we never locked our home unless we were going on vacation. My in-laws' 1955 Chevrolet had an ignition that could be turned on and used from that point on without the key – which they did! Because of mass immigration, however, personal safety is now in a perilous state in the US. The death count from immigrants slaughtering US citizens exceeds the death toll of US soldiers in Iraq. The US government allows gangs like the Bloods and the Crips and MS-13 to operate with impunity. These gangs are now reported to be operating within a mile of our neighborhood.

Because of the collapse of personal security, when we returned to the US and bought a new home, we enquired about installing a security system. What we saw was a complete joke. For far more than we paid in Africa, you could contract a security service with a major firm, such as ADT. But what you got for this money was nothing more than a link to a “call center” in Colorado or New Jersey. The call center would then call your local police! What a joke. I am perfectly capable of calling the police by myself, for free (zero marginal cost, since I already own a telephone).

The Illusionist

While watching CNN En Español in Honduras a couple of weeks ago, I saw a clip on an illusionist, Criss Angel. This guy is really incredible. His acts are as impressive as those of David Copperfield, but without the stage. He can levitate people or himself, or walk on water, in broad daylight, in public places such as a golf course, a public swimming pool, or Times Square.

The High Cost of Knock-Offs

In my e-mail “spam” (junk mail) every day, I receive many ads for “knock-offs” – illegal copies of items such as medical pills, computer software, and expensive watches. What really amazes me is the high cost of these items. From my overseas travels, I have a good idea of what pirated copies are worth, and it is not very much. You can buy any of a number of Rolex models, or any other famous luxury brand of watch, on the street in Lusaka, Zambia, for about USD10.00. You can buy almost any software package you want, or the latest DVD movie, for a dollar, from a legal store in Bali, Indonesia. Some medications overseas are extremely

inexpensive (e.g., Lariam (mefloquine), an antimalarial drug, often costs one-tenth what it costs in the US), but Viagra and Cialis are often the same price as in the US.

The curious thing is that the e-mail ads that I receive advertise \$1,000 software packages for, say, \$69, and \$5,000 watches for, say \$65. These prices for knock-offs are ridiculously high. Why pay \$69 for a knock-off software package that sells for \$1, or \$65 for a knock-off designer watch that sells for \$10? Once you have decided to break the law or ignore a copyright owner's suggested price, why pay more than you have to? Why pay \$65 for a \$1,000 software knock-off, when you can get it for \$1? The crime is the same. As they say, if you are going to swallow a frog, make it a big one. (By the way, buying knock-offs in many places is perfectly legal, as long as you do not bring them to the US. The "crime" in many places is not a violation of local law, but a moral decision not to pay the copyright owner his asking price.)

Free Music

As you know, I offer (and always have) all of my recordings free of charge, on the Foundation website. I was pleasantly surprised to read last week in *Time* magazine ("Radical Remix," October 15, 2007) that a popular band [by name of Radiohead – I've never heard of them, but, on the other hand, they've probably never heard of me either] has now decided to offer its new recording release free of charge. Here are some clips from the article:

"While a deluxe boxed-set version [of the new album, *In Rainbows*] for superfans is available for \$80, the downloadable album's 10 songs have no price. Drop them into the online checkout basket, and the register says 'It's up to you.' Click again, and the word's 'It's really up to you' appear – and really, it is. *In Rainbows* is the first major release whose price is set by you. And it's perfectly acceptable to pay zero."

"Many record-company lifers were stung by the rejection of a band on a decade-long run of excellence, but the real damage could stem less from Radiohead's determination to go it alone than from its 'stadium sound at museum pricing' scheme. 'That's the interesting part of all this,' says an American hip-hop producer. 'Radiohead is the best band in the world. If you can pay whatever you want for music by the best band in the world, why would you pay \$13 or 99 cents for music by somebody less talented?'"

In my opinion, music, like water, should be free. I am pleased that at least some part of the world is returning to this paradigm.

No Respect for Ahmadinejad

I was disappointed at the lack of respect shown by Columbia University to its invited guest, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, in his recent presentation there. If you invite someone to your place, you should treat him with respect. I see no excuse for this display of bad manners.

Children Play Indoors Now

When I was a child, parents “put their children out to play” each day. We were rarely ever allowed inside each other’s homes, except for special occasions such as birthday parties. We were never bored. We always had a lot to do. Games to play, walks to take, fields to romp in, woods to play in, places to visit, things to talk about. We played many games on our paved street, including “Red Rover,” hopscotch, skip rope, and India-rubber ball game (“Ordinary, moving, ...), and hockey (in the street on the hard-packed snow under the streetlamp in wintertime). We had snowball fights. We played “potsies” (a game of marbles), and “kick the can” (a form of hide-and-seek). We traded milk bottle tops, comic books, hockey cards and Nabisco Shredded Wheat Straight Arrow Injun-uity cards. We collected stamps and matchbook covers. We played “commandos” with wooden rifles that we made by ourselves. We caught garter snakes, leopard frogs, monarch butterflies, bees and fireflies. We picked wild raspberries, strawberries, grapes and blueberries, and cracked hickory nuts. We played “knockers” with chestnuts (there were still lots of chestnut trees then – they hadn’t all died.). Sometimes, we built soap-box derbies and tree-houses in summer and igloos in winter. We walked downtown to the movies, the municipal park or the library. On rainy days, we read, made puzzles, played with cars, tin soldiers, Chinese checkers, or Battleships. In later years, we rode bicycles, and our horizons expanded immensely.

Now, it seems, children spend much of their time indoors, and they are often bored. “What’s to do?” is often heard. How sad. Why?

We often got dirty, and this didn’t seem to hurt us a bit. In fact, I read recently where today’s children are raised in such aseptic environments that they do not have as strong immune systems as the children of previous generations.

Bad Real Estate Contracts

Have you ever read a “standard” real-estate agreement of purchase and sale? If you have, you will see that it is filled with draconian clauses that are obscenely in favor of the real-estate agent or the buyer, and very detrimental to your interests. This is very strange, inasmuch as it is *you* who is paying the sales commission.

The worst clauses are those that require you to pay a massive amount of money to correct any problems that may be identified (e.g., through inspections), after you list the house with the broker. For example, you may be asked to agree to pay up to three percent or five percent or ten percent of the listing value to repair a roof, or termite damage, or anything else that is found to be wrong. These costs can easily run to many thousands of dollars. The problem is that if you do not pay, then you are in violation of the contract and the realtor is entitled to his fee, whether the house is sold or not.

I have bought and sold a number of homes in my lifetime, and it seems that these noxious clauses are in every “standard contract.” I immediately strike them out, at which point the real-estate agent complains that this is simply a standard contract approved by the local real-estate board, and I am being unreasonable. I insist, and in most cases they agree to strike all of the offending clauses – something is better than nothing. If they do not, I simply find another listing

agent (most real-estate brokers work through multiple listing services, and so it does not matter much who you list with).

What I request in the contract is that if problems are detected, then I have the option of fixing them or not, and if I do not, the buyer is buying the home in full knowledge of the problem. If the problem is serious, then I have the option of lowering the price, if I choose. If the problem must be fixed in order for the house to be legally sold (e.g., a termite infestation), and I do not wish to spend the money to address the issue, then I may terminate the listing contract. In other words, I am in complete control of my money throughout the transaction. There is no possibility that the broker may force me to spend a large amount of money just to keep his deal alive.

Whatever Happened to the Greenwich Meridian?

When I was a child, we were taught that the meridian passing through Greenwich, England, had a special name – it was called the Greenwich Meridian. A few weeks ago, while skipping through the television channels, my wife and I came across a program, “Are You Smarter than a Fifth-Grader?” We had heard of this program, and watched it for a few minutes. One of the questions was “What is the name of the Earth meridian (line of longitude) for which the longitude is defined to be zero degrees?” (or something like that). The answer was given and accepted as the “Prime Meridian.”

Allowing the Prime Meridian to be called the Greenwich Meridian could never be allowed to continue in today’s politically correct world, in which all ethnicities are equal. It would be a serious ethnic slight to all of the other peoples of the world to suggest that Greenwich, England, was of special significance relative to the science of geography. We wouldn’t want them to feel bad, would we, now?

Lots of words are being replaced today. When I was a child, the words, idiot, moron, imbecile and genius all had specific meanings, defined in terms of intelligence quotient. If you look these terms up in the American Heritage Dictionary today, you will find the note: “The term belongs to a classification system no longer in use and is now considered offensive.” When I was a child, you could call a spade a spade. If someone was an idiot, we called him an idiot.

Postman / postal worker; fireman / firefighter; man-month / person month; chairman / chairperson; rape / sexual assault; rapeseed oil / canola oil, he / he or she. When will it ever end?

Leprosy Skyrocketing

Now that the US has adopted a policy of open borders, mass immigration, the leprosy rate is now skyrocketing. This would be just one more example of a very foolish policy by a government that cared about its people. The sad thing is, however, that our government does not give a hoot about its people – its middle class – except as laborers and consumers of goods and services controlled by the wealthy elite. Skyrocketing leprosy does not bother our government at all, or the wealthy elite, either. It simply generates more wealth for them.

Not Invented Here

For many years, British police used DNA testing in their forensic investigations. After a long delay, US police finally adopted this useful technique. Why were US police many years behind the British in using DNA testing?

For many decades, the Russians have been using a stretching device to lengthen a leg that was shorter than the other, or to lengthen two legs that were extremely short. US doctors did not start to use this procedure until decades later. Why?

The French (Michelin Company) introduced radial tires several decades ago. US tire manufacturers insisted that bias-ply tires were “just as good,” and refused to offer them as an alternative, for quite some time. The public quickly found out that the US tire manufacturers were lying, and started buying Michelin radial tires in large numbers. The US tire manufacturers eventually stopped lying, and started producing radial tires.

Glucosamine and chondroitin compounds were used in Europe for decades before their widespread use in the US. Thousands of US citizens have endured the pain and expense of unnecessary hip replacements, because of this. Was this simply ignorance on the part of the US medical establishment, or the fact that glucosamine and chondroitin were natural compounds that could not be patented and sold for high prices, and hip replacements were extremely profitable.

Osteopathic medicine (American Heritage Dictionary definition: A system of medicine based on the theory that disturbances in the musculoskeletal system affect other bodily parts, causing many disorders that can be corrected by various manipulative techniques in conjunction with conventional medical, surgical, pharmacological, and other therapeutic procedures.) has been used in Britain for decades, and is of proven worth. The US medical establishment has persistently refused to recognize this worthwhile practice. Its stubbornness has driven many people to seek treatment from charlatans and chiropractors, rather than obtain care from highly qualified and trained medical professionals.

The “not-invented-here” complex is alive and well in the US.

Avoiding a Humanitarian Disaster in Iraq

On the news, you hear it said a lot that if the US were to leave Iraq, there would be a “humanitarian disaster.” But under the US domination, far more people have been killed than under the former dictator, Sadaam Hussein, who the US deposed and executed. It seems likely that if the US were to leave, a new dictator would quickly fill the power vacuum, and the level of violence would in fact fall from present high levels. Order would return to replace the anarchy and chaos that the US invasion has caused.

Iraq is already a humanitarian disaster. If the US were to leave, things would soon improve. It is very misleading to suggest that if the US were to leave, this would *cause* a humanitarian disaster. What is in fact the case is that the US *invasion* has caused a humanitarian disaster, and is forcing it to continue. If it were to leave, the humanitarian disaster that it has caused would soon cease.

The US invaded Iraq for access to its oil. Unfortunately, it has obtained very little oil for its trouble. Paul Wolfowitz once predicted that the Iraq war would be paid for with Iraqi oil. What a laugh. It is high time for the US to reassess its involvement, and certainly its demonstrably failed strategy. It should change its strategy and win the war in Iraq, or it should give up its plans to gain access to Iraqi oil, and go home.

General David Grange on the Iraq War

On the October 11, 2007, edition of CNN's Lou Dobbs Tonight, Mr. Dobbs interviewed retired Lieutenant General David E. Grange, Jr. Lou expressed his extreme frustration that the US had been waging a very expensive war in Iraq for four years now, and was making no progress toward winning, and he asked General Grange very bluntly to explain how the military could be so feckless in this effort. General Grange could not give a coherent answer. He implied that the fault lay with our civilian leaders, but Dobbs would not accept that excuse or explanation.

As quickly as we kill an insurgent, another rises to take his place. The supply of enemy combatants is cheap and inexhaustible. The cost of our troops is about three quarters of a million dollars per soldier per year. The medical cost of treating a soldier wounded by a roadside bomb ("improvised explosive device") can easily run to more than a million dollars, and his future care to millions more. There is no way in the world that we can win this war, the way that we are fighting it. General Grange should have said so, instead of waffling to the point of lying.

As I have written before, Machiavelli long ago identified three ways to administer a conquered people: (1) annihilate them; (2) move in among them in such large numbers as to overwhelm them, as the Europeans did with the North American Indians several centuries ago and China is now doing in Tibet; (3) set up a puppet ruler who is beholden to you. The US has chosen none of these three options, and it will continue to lose the war in Iraq.

Bodies Protected, Faces Ravaged

You see a lot of reports these days about the terrible face wounds being received by our combat troops in Iraq. Because of the substantial improvement in body armor, many soldiers who would have been otherwise killed are now surviving, and many of them have devastating face wounds. A similar situation holds for missing limbs – hands and arms, feet and legs.

This is a terrible situation. But it is unnecessary. And unnatural. Nature does not provide its creatures with an unusually high degree of protection in one area. It "balances" the risk.

There are worse things than death – we are all going to die, it is simply a matter of when. Going to war and dying a hero is one fate. Returning from battle alive to face a lifetime as a hideous, disfigured monster is another. The soldier, his family, and his country would be better off emotionally if he were dead, but the medical profession has a strong financial interest in keeping him alive and treating him to the cost of millions of dollars.

The story goes that Henry Ford sent a team of investigators to junk yards across America to study the condition of components of worn-out and junked Ford automobiles. Upon conclusion

of their study they reported to him that significant wear and tear and failure was seen in all parts except the king pins (a part of the front wheel assembly no longer present in modern automobiles), which were almost always in excellent condition. On hearing this, Ford issued the order to reduce the diameter of the king pins. Nature works the same way. It does not design a heart that lasts for 200 years and put it in a body filled with parts that last only 65 years. It does not promote the carrying of any more weight than is necessary for each part, component, or system. Evolution moves toward an optimal balance.

The American fighting man's body armor is no longer in balance. A very large proportion of the total weight of his body armor is allocated to his chest. The speed with which soldiers are given effective medical care has increased dramatically. The result is a large number of surviving veterans return home alive with horrific head and face wounds, eye damage, brain damage, ear damage and missing limbs. Unless and until a means is found to provide his head, face and limbs with protection comparable to his chest, the weight of the chest armor should be reduced. The weight of present chest armor is very substantial, to the point where it interferes significantly with the soldier's mobility. The weight of his body armor should be reduced. In fact some consideration might be given to allowing the soldier an option of whether he wishes to use it at all.

It is well known that from the enemy's viewpoint a wounded combatant is worth far more than a killed one, because of the support needed to care for him. A reduction in chest armor would benefit the commander as well as the soldier. An "operations research" study of body armor would surely show that it is not desirable, given any reasonable objective function (and keeping a soldier alive no matter what his condition is *not* a reasonable objective function).

The Discrediting of Che Guevara

All of a sudden, there is a lot of attention being given to Ernesto "Che" Guevara, pointing out that he was a ruthless killer. See, e.g., the October 13, 2007, issue of *The Economist*, "Che Guevara: A modern saint and sinner"; or "Remember the lives of Cubans who died fighting for freedom" in the October 12 issue of *USA Today*. All of a sudden, Guevara is being compared to the likes of Feliks Dzerzhinsky (who killed Vladimir Lenin's opponents) or Hermann Göring or Heinrich Himmler of Nazi Germany.

I have never had respect for Guevara – not because he executed a lot of people, but because of his intellectual inconsistency / superficiality. Many years ago, I read his book, *Guerrilla Warfare* (University of Nebraska Press, 1985). Unlike profound thinkers, Guevara would formulate a theory (of guerilla warfare) based on an experience and then, some time later, based on another experience, he would revise it and formulate another theory. He deserves no respect from an intellectual viewpoint, and so it is not surprising to me that he is now being discredited from a moral viewpoint as well.

Ann Coulter Interview

I caught the tail end of an interview between Danny Deutsch and Ann Coulter on October 12, 2007, in which Ms. Coulter asserted that the Jews needed to be "perfected" by conversion to

Christianity. Deutsch expressed or feigned incredulity at her assertion, implying that she was a bigot, and stating, “don’t you see how hateful, how anti-Semitic” her view was.

The incredible thing is that his view was exactly the opposite – that Jews do not need to be “perfected” at all. He was just as assertive in his viewpoint as she was in hers. He was just as dogmatic as she was. His position was exactly as extreme (and arbitrary) as hers, and yet he was trying to imply that it was *she* who was the bigot, not he.

This sort of behavior is typical of Jewry. The Jews can tell their daughters not to date or marry gentiles (“goyim”), and they claim that they are simply practicing their religion. They refuse Israeli citizenship to non-Jews, and yet demand that the US open its doors to mass immigration by people from all cultures, ethnicities and religions. The Jewish-controlled US film industry is constantly promoting films oriented toward destruction of white, Christian culture, but the B’nai B’rith Anti-Defamation League screams “defamation” and “discrimination” and “anti-Semitism” at the drop of a hat at any depiction that shows Judaism in an unfavorable light or is detrimental to Jewish culture. Free speech is fine for promoting Jewish interests, but if you make statements diminishing the Jewish Holocaust in Canada, you will go to jail.

More than any other single group, it is Jewish interests (the ADL, along with Senator Edward M. Kennedy) who pressed for passage of the Immigration Act of 1965, which has flooded the US with people from all cultures and as a result has destroyed the hegemony of European culture in the US and a massive amount of American land (150 million acres of natural land has been destroyed – converted to roads, parking lots, homes, buildings, and other infrastructure – since passage of that Act, to make room for immigrants). Using racial, ethnic and religious discrimination to preserve and promote Jewish culture and build up the Jewish state of Israel, while at the same time fighting US efforts to preserve and protect its own culture and country, is irritating in the extreme.

It is time for people who have an interest in preserving what is left of European culture in the US to take a stand. It is time to resist the onslaught of Jewry on US culture. Carry on, Ms. Coulter.

Conservation Will Help? Rubbish!

A few weeks ago on the *Today* show, a scientist was presenting his views on the destruction of the planet by industrial society. Incredibly, he stated that conservation would help. Conservation will not help at all. What is the point to conserving by 10 percent, when the global population increases by that amount in seven years?

Tesla, Not Marconi, Invented Radio

In a recent issue, *The Economist* stated that Marconi invented the radio. This is an egregious falsehood. Radio was invented and demonstrated by Nicola Tesla several years before Marconi was awarded a patent for it. Marconi did not conceive or invent radio at all. He saw radio demonstrated by Tesla, and then proceeded to construct his own radio and apply for a patent for it.

I sent an e-mail to *The Economist* requesting that they correct this error, but they did not respond.

The White Man's Burden

A few months ago, radio personality Don Imus was fired by MS-NBC for referring to the Rutgers' women's basketball team as "Nappy headed hos." At the time, I had no idea what a "ho" was. My sister explained to me that it was "black talk" for "whore." The expression is evidently used a lot in black "Rap" music, along with "bitches," to refer to women.

Imus sued MS-NBC for damages and won, since his contract required him to be deliberately outrageous and provocative.

Immediately after this flap, many people pointed out that black Rap music uses this language all of the time – even in published CD recordings – and no public outrage is heard whatsoever. So why was there such an outrage over Imus' use of the term?

As I have commented on numerous occasions, only whites can be racist, and so this seemingly strange inconsistency is explained. A totally different standard of morality is applied by US society to whites than to blacks. Blacks have called other blacks niggers, hos and bitches in common parlance and in commercially marketed music recordings, and no protest is ever heard. When it was first reported that blacks were being killed in Iraq in a higher proportion than their representation in the US population, there was loud protest from the black community and from liberal and anti-American groups. When an investigation showed that the situation was in fact exactly the opposite, and that it was whites that were being killed out of proportion to their numbers in the general US population, not a peep was heard.

Martin Luther King, Jr. was a known libertine, but this was never publicly discussed in the mass media. If a white US congressman or senator has a fling, however, it is front page news, and the man's career is likely to go down in flames. When USAID Administrator Randall Tobias was revealed to have received massages from escort services, he was forced to resign immediately.

The point that seems not to be recognized by non-European cultures is that there are tremendous benefits to be realized by adhering to strict discipline and moral actions. It is not for nothing that European culture rules the world. From the viewpoint of running empires, whether political or financial, white morality is significantly superior to the alternatives.

Georgia Chain Gangs

When, as a boy, our family drove through Georgia, we saw chain gangs doing manual labor along the highways. The inmates were dressed in traditional black-and-white convict uniforms, and were guarded by deputies holding shotguns propped on their hips. This was very impressive.

No One Dresses Up Anymore

While waiting in line for a visa in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, airport recently, I happened to notice how people were dressed. Except for one other man, I was the only one in a coat and tie. Two people wore leather jackets. It took the better part of an hour for the lines to clear – there were well over one hundred people waiting in line.

It appears that no one dresses up anymore. Not in restaurants, not in airplanes, and not even in the workplace.

I spent this past weekend at Fripp Island, South Carolina, with friends, and read the *Beaufort Gazette* (which used to be owned by an uncle of mine, back in the 1950s). One issue contained an interesting article on the topic of dress: “Real men wear ascots for a dash of individuality,” by Otis R. Taylor, Jr. of *The State* newspaper in Columbia, SC. Since I wear an ascot on occasion, I read the article. Here follows an excerpt.

[Beginning of excerpt.]

Ascots, the narrow neckbands with pointed wings, once were reserved for proper morning dress of England's noble society. The tie's name refers to Royal Ascot, an English version of the Kentucky Derby, where elegance and socializing is more important than the horse racing. (Sound familiar?)

Any man knows that a necktie can be constricting, like wearing a barber's cape through several meetings, a long lunch and two commutes. But an ascot gives open-collar freedom and a not-so-subtle look of individuality

In this flip-flop generation, dress codes for men – pre-ripped jeans with perfectly distressed creases that cost \$300 but look like a rummage sale find – are contrived and conformist. And that's not saying anything about Air Jordans and boxy, tent-like white T-shirts.

The Southern dress code – khaki pants, white collared shirt, blue blazer and, of course, boat shoes – is even more uniforming. Though a uniform does seem a better choice than, say, going to the post office in Nike sneakers, Adidas ankle socks, carpenter Jean shorts and a Vans T-shirt.

Almost out of necessity, Bill Stubbs, a retired commercial real estate agent, chose the ascot look about five years ago.

‘I lost 90 pounds and I had nothing in my closet that fit at all,’ he said. “Literally, I had to rebuild my wardrobe, so I wanted to do something different.”

Stubbs, 59, who doesn't wear ascots until the temperature dips below 80 degrees, pairs his with blazers and crew neck sweaters. He is fond of the traditional ascot: a scarf knotted around the neck, which invokes an image of aviators coolly navigating a high-altitude dogfight.

Ascots, as Stubbs pointed out, are for men who aren't afraid of widening their fashion palate. A lot of men in this jeans and T-shirt fashion era – and women, for that matter – might see the ascot and men's neckwear as effeminate. “Which is utterly ridiculous,” Stubbs said.

Though not endorsed in Esquire's latest *Big Black Book* volume, men who know fashion – like Andre 3000, a former Esquire best-dressed man honoree – are comfortable in an ascot.

Ascots are beholden to an age when people rarely went out except in their Sunday best.

"I'm still young enough to remember when people got dressed up for ball games and to get on airplanes," said Sewell, 40, who wore a goldfish ascot to the Oct. 4 University of South Carolina-Kentucky game.

"Everybody looked good. You should always look your best."

In addition, the ascot is easier to knot than a conventional tie and more of a statement than a bow tie.

It's for a man of indefatigable confidence; a man who doesn't need his wife, girlfriend or mother to dress him; a man who knows what he wants in his outfits.

"I'll do anything not to wear a regular tie," said Sewell, who has been wearing ascots for almost 10 years. "To match a tie with a blazer, that's work."

[End of excerpt.]

Recent Critiques on Religion

I recently completed reading Christopher Hitchens' book, *god is not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything* (Twelve / Warner, 2007). It was an interesting description of the terrible damage that religion causes in human relationships. I purchased Richard Dawkins' *The God Delusion* (Houghton Mifflin, 2006) some time ago, but have not had time to read it. Some time ago I read Edward O. Wilson's *The Creation: An Appeal to Save Life on Earth* (W. W. Norton, 2006). It seems that all of a sudden there is a lot of interest in religion. Here follows excerpts from a column appearing in the October 14, 2007, issue of the *Beaufort Gazette*, entitled, "Hitchens, Alexie among National Book Award finalists" by Hillel Italie (The Associated Press).

[Beginning of excerpts.]

The Associated Press

NEW YORK - Should Christopher Hitchens win a National Book Award, you can be sure he won't thank any higher powers.

The author, columnist and commentator was nominated for "God Is Not Great," a polemic with a self-evident theme. Hitchens' book received mixed reviews, but became a best seller over the spring and summer and continued a wave of anti-religious works, including Richard Dawkins' "The God Delusion" and Daniel Dennett's "Breaking the Spell."

Besides Hitchens, nonfiction nominees include Edwidge Danticat for her memoir, "Brother, I'm Dying," Woody Holton's "Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution" and Tim Weiner's "Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA."

It was the first National Book Award nomination for the British-born Hitchens, who wasn't even eligible for the prize until last April, when on his 58th birthday he became a United States citizen. He resides in Washington, D.C., and has well lived up to the title of his featured column on Slate, "Fighting Words."

[End of excerpts.]

Hyperinflation in the US

I read recently where an Honus Wagner baseball card sold for USD 1.2 million dollars. This is both a comment on the misplaced values of US culture and the inflation of the US dollar. Despite government statements about the rate of inflation or the cost of living, it is the worst I have seen in a long time. When I left for Zambia in 2002, a glass of wine in most restaurants was \$2.50. Now it is usually \$7.50. A meal in a neighborhood family restaurant not too long ago cost less than \$10. Now it usually costs \$20-30. I mentioned earlier that I paid about \$500 to replace the lenses in two pairs of glasses, and about \$1,000 for a conventional-style mattress. This morning, my wife paid \$1.19 for a grapefruit at Publix supermarket. I read recently where the price of Florida orange trees has jumped from \$1 a few years ago to \$10 today. The jump in prices is really big. George Bush has really done a number on the US financial situation.

The income distribution in the US is becoming more and more skewed. In 1940, a tool-and-die maker might make \$5,000 per year, and a physician \$10,000. Now, the tool-and-die maker might make \$50,000, but many physicians make \$500,000 to several million dollars per year. College coaches routinely make over a million dollars a year. CEOs make many millions of dollars each year, whether their companies prosper or founder.

The US government is spending billions of dollars on war and social welfare programs for which the US middle class has no interest. Yet it is the US middle class that ends up paying for these programs. The quality of life for the US middle class has fallen dramatically from when I was a boy. Then, the father of a household could support his family along, and own a house and car. Now, both parents must work, and many families will never own their own home. Paying for expensive social programs and wars that you don't want while you are doing all right is one thing, but paying for these things when they cause a substantial decline in your own quality of life is quite another. The breaking point is not far away.

Neale Donald Walsch Is from Spartanburg

I am always surprised at the number of persons and companies that hail from my home town of Spartanburg / Spartanburg County. Businesses include Blockbuster, Denny's, Hardee's, Quincy's, BMW, Advance America, Extended Stay America and Milliken. Famous persons include General William Westmoreland (director of war operations in Vietnam, from Pacolet, a suburb of Spartanburg) and James F. Byrnes (Harry S. Truman's Secretary of State, from Duncan, in Spartanburg County, next door to the City of Spartanburg and a couple of miles from my home). The inventor of the Trico windshield washer blade is from Spartanburg (the father of my friend, Ernest Eaddy). The man who invented the process for creosote pressure-treatment of telephone poles (Dr. Mauny Hudson) was from Spartanburg.

Not too long ago, I read where Neale Donald Walsch, author of the Conversations with God series, is from Spartanburg. Here follows the article by Kim Kimzey, "Neale Donald Walsch:

'Conversations' began with a voice," appearing in the April 14, 2007, issue of the *Spartanburg Herald-Journal*.

Long before Neale Donald Walsch authored the best-selling series "Conversations with God," he was known locally as "Bob White" on Spartanburg's now-defunct WORD Radio.

When Walsch wasn't on air, he was on stage, starring in Spartanburg Little Theatre productions including "Mary, Mary" and "The Unsinkable Molly Brown" in 1965.

"I had a beautiful home in Duncan – certainly couldn't afford to buy it, but I leased it from a very nice gentleman," Walsch said recently. "It was a huge house with tall pillars and just a typical old Southern mansion."

It's been years since Walsch visited Spartanburg.

He had no idea the Little Theatre is now housed at David W. Reid Playhouse.

"You can thank me for that," he joked. "I was wildly successful at elping them raise that money. Nah, just kidding."

Walsch, who was once homeless and pondering the point of life after leaving Spartanburg, is now on a mission to launch a "global civil rights movement for the soul."

The globe-trotting guru's new book, "Home with God," is the final installment in his series. The film version of "Conversations with God" was recently released on DVD.

Walsch will visit Black Mountain, N.C., in May for a "Conversations with God" retreat. For more information, visit <http://www.cwg.org> .

Question: For people unfamiliar with your work, how did you become an "accidental spiritual messenger?"

Answer: Well, by accident ... I had lost my then-current job, my relationship was faltering, my health was going downhill. This was in the early '80s, actually, and I thought, "Gosh, what does it take to make life work? I don't understand." I began having bouts of periodic depression. Finally, one night, I got up in the middle of the night and just started pacing around and was angry with myself and yelling inside my head, "What does it take to make life work?"

I heard a voice, a very real and audible voice in the room, say, "Do you really want answers to all of these questions, or are you just ranting?"

I began to receive – I think – inspiring insights. That led to writing many of those things in my journal because I didn't want to forget what I was hearing. Those journal notes later became the book that we know as "Conversations with God."

Q: What did God's voice sound like?

A: The sound of my own thoughts.

Q: Why has "Conversations with God" resonated with so many readers?

A: People the world over are searching for answers, and they're very clear that life the way we're living it is not functioning, it's not working.... We're looking at the world and how angry it's become, and how violent it's become, and how oppressive it's become, and how filled with suffering it's become, and we're saying to ourselves, "Golly, gee willikers. For a species of sentient beings that imagines itself to be somewhat evolved, surely we can do better than this."

I think that yearning for something better to hand to our children, and to their children, is what has led to the popularity of the books that I've written, and for that matter, almost all books that have to do with personal growth and spiritual development.

Q: What was your lowest point when you were living on the streets?

A: The moment it felt very clear to me I was never going to get off the street – I was never going to be able to pull myself up out of that ... it's very difficult to get off the street once you're there for any length of time at all, because you can't afford a haircut, you can't even afford a shower. It starts to be a huge deal to get \$8 together to get a haircut and maybe clean yourself up.

Q: You say dogma is killing us. How so?

A: Dogma limits us. It stops us from asking questions. I think that if we don't start asking some very important, serious questions, we're going to continue our self-destructive behaviors which are killing us, both the more overt behaviors which are conflict and killing between human beings, not only in the Middle East, but around the world, as well as not quite so obvious but equally self-destructive behaviors such as the spoiling of our environment and the slow but sure erosion of the quality of life.

Q: Can you tell me about Humanity's Team?

A: It's an organization, a worldwide membership, that is placing into the space of our lives the civil rights movement for our souls – the last great civil rights movement on the earth. Free humanity at last from the oppression of its beliefs in a violent, angry and vindictive God.

Q: Why should people read your newest book, "Home with God?"

A: People may wish to read "Home with God" if they have an interest in learning one person's point of view about what happens at the moment of our death, and the moments beyond, and the cycle of all life from the realm of the spiritual to the realm of the physical ... death as we understand it – meaning the end of everything – does not exist.

Plans for Coal-Fired Plants Dropped

I read recently (I can't find the article just now) that plans to develop about a dozen coal-fired electricity generating power plants in the US west have been abandoned. Even with the price of a barrel of oil over \$80, these plants are not practical, either for economic or environmental reasons.

By the way, I told my wife earlier this year, when I heard someone predict that the price of oil would probably reach \$100 a barrel within two years, that it would reach \$100 a barrel before

the end of this year (this was back when it was in the \$60 range). Barring a global recession, I still hold to my prediction.

Hal Lindsey's Prediction about the Demise of Israel

In his book, *The Late Great Planet Earth* (with C. C. Carson, Zondervan Publishing House, 1970. Harper Paperbacks, 1992), Hal Lindsey promotes the idea that Israel will be destroyed by Russia and its allies, and that China, with an army of 200 million soldiers, will wipe out one-third of the world's population (as predicted by John of Patmos in the Christian Bible's book of Revelation).

Blue Jeans Are Farmer's Pants

When I was a teenager in the 1950s, I and practically every other teenage boy wore blue jeans. There were three major brands – Wrangler (by far the most popular), Lee, and Levi's. Levi's typically were sold with a button fly rather than a zipper fly. Levi's were not preshrunk (or "Sanforized"), and you had to buy a couple of sizes larger than you needed, and wash them before wearing.

At some point, I happened to notice that my father never wore blue jeans. (In fact he never owned a pair in his life.) I asked him why not. He said to me that blue jeans were farmer's pants. That's all. Enough said.

Another Case of Terminal Development

This past weekend (October 13-14, 2007) my wife and I spent at the beach. We stayed with friends who own a home on Fripp Island, South Carolina. The island is a beautiful private resort, and South Carolina beaches are the most beautiful in the world. Fripp Island is just beyond Hunting Island, where my family camped in the 1950s. The bridge from Hunting Island to Fripp Island was built about 1961, at which time "development" started.

My friend, Archie, and his wife Liz, bought one of the first "packages" on the island – two lots for \$4,000. The average price of homes on the island is now close to one million dollars apiece.

A few years ago, the island was about half developed, and a motion-picture company filmed *The Jungle Boy* in the undeveloped part. The original plan called for 1500 lots. All of the island has been developed now and there are over 1,500 buildings on the island, but there are still about 500 empty lots for sale.

Originally, the homes used septic tanks. A couple of years ago, the density of homes / population reached the point where septic tanks could no longer handle the sewage load, and the island is now in the process of installing a high-tech "vacuum" sewer system. If you do not agree to hook up to the system, your water is cut off.

This is such a tragedy, but it is so typical of our times. The country's population *modus operandi* (I am reluctant to call it a "plan") is to maintain US population growth at about one

percent, until the country suffocates on its own waste. Fripp Island's development plan follows this same path. Fripp Island is drowning in its own waste, but the developers will not stop. They will develop the last 500 lots, no matter what.

None of the Above: The Democrats Are the Same as the Republicans

Before the 2006 midterm election, I told my wife that there was no point in voting at all, since there was no difference between the Democrats and the Republicans. They are all thralls to the wealthy elite that control the country, and they all stand for open borders, mass immigration and massive international free trade, which are destroying the country's land, its culture, and the quality of life for the US middle class.

Recently, on Lou Dobbs Tonight, Mr. Dobbs has been reporting that the Democratic majority that was voted into both houses of Congress has not made any difference at all. No surprise here.

(By the way, if you want to pass a pleasant evening with strangers, it is best to follow the old adage, "Never talk about politics or religion in a social context." My wife and I were at a "Wednesday Night Supper" at our church some time ago, and the couple next to us asked what we thought about the current political situation. I told them my view that the Republicans were as bad as the Democrats, that one party was as bad as the other, and that they were both bent on destroying the country and the middle class. Well, this remark, ill-considered in the context of polite dinner conversation, was guaranteed to offend them whether they were Democrats or Republicans. And it did. They promptly got up and left the table.)

What's In a Name, Hillary Clinton

When Hillary Clinton first hit the scene, she insisted that everyone refer to her as "Hillary Rodham Clinton." Now that she is running for president of the US, she is sensitive to the fact that many Americans – both men and women – are offended by this usage, she is always referred to simply as "Hillary Clinton" (or Mrs. Clinton, but not Ms. Clinton).

The US Border Fence Should Be Cancelled?

On the Foundation website today, I received a hit from a Google search using the phrase, "border fence should be cancelled." It certainly should. Given that the US government has no intention of allowing immigration, illegal or otherwise, to decrease, it is a complete boondoggle. The US government promotes it because it knows that it will not allow it to work, and its high price tag helps increase gross national product. (It is regrettable for the US middle class that although they do not want mass immigration, they still have to pay for this hoax.) If the government were serious about stemming the flow of illegal aliens across the US-Mexican border, it would replace the fence, or planned fence, by a much less expensive and more effective line of machine-gun nests, one each mile along the border.

Another hit I received today was from the search term, “how many government workers are there in Florida?” The answer is “few” -- there are lots of government *employees*, but few government *workers*. (This is tongue-in-cheek: I know that many government employees take their jobs seriously and are hard workers – the wording of the question just struck me as strange.)