

Miscellany 53: Death by Illegal Alien; Destroying Strawberries; RIP Hummer; Regression to the Mean; Knowledge-Based Belief; Spend the Oil; Obama Promised Change; Cashless Cabins; Abraham Lincoln Quotes; US Design Life; AIG Is Selling Credit Default Swaps Again? US President Pimps; The Dream Act; Government Arrogance; Ben Bernanke and Monetization of the US Debt; Katrina Five Years Later; Economics Is the Science of Scarcity; US Government Destroys Manufacturing; No Pork on Air France; The Ultimate Weapon of Mass Destruction; The Cost of the Economic Stimulus; This Real Issue Is Immigration, not Illegal Immigration; The Value of Experience; The Pope in London; RIP Incandescent Light Bulbs; The De-development of America; The Not-Invented-Here (NIH) Syndrome; Eugenics in the US; Where Does Obama Stand?; Infanticide; Botswana Genocide; A Quick Solution to the US Unemployment Problem; Eschatology; Word Meanings; No Free Lunch; Memory; Fish Oil; Killing an Elk; The Anti-Missile System; The Iraq War; US Housing Policy; The Free Will; Imperative; To Do Good; Repeal MLK Day; Affirmative Action; Millennium Challenge Corporation; Cap and Trade; World War II: A Preview of Things to Come; Carter Criticizes Kennedy; Our Best Minds? The American Way; Relocating Iraqis to the US

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Commentary on recent news, reading and events of personal interest. (It has been almost a year since my last Miscellany. I have been very busy this year. This edition of Miscellany comments very briefly on topics on which I would have written, had I had more time. Many of the topics are now “yesterday’s news,” but it is time to get them off the table.)

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Death by Illegal Alien

It was reported recently that the arrested killer of Chandra Levy (an intern to former Congressman Gary Condit) had been found guilty of her murder. He was Ingmar Guandique, an illegal alien from El Salvador. How long are Americans going to tolerate the continued slaughter of their fellow citizens by illegal aliens? As I have written before, more Americans die each year because of illegal aliens (mainly murders and traffic accidents) than died each year in the war in Iraq, and die each year now in the war in Afghanistan.

Fairer justice would prevail if the US President and members of Congress were placed on trial for Levy's murder. It is their policies of allowing mass illegal immigration that led directly to Levy's death.

The US government aids and abets the invasion of America by illegal aliens, because it is good for business – it helps create more wealth for the wealthy controllers of America. It matters not to them that they are killing US citizens, destroying our environment and culture, and occupying our space. The US President takes a vow to defend the country from invasion, but every

president from Dwight Eisenhower has reneged on this vow, and is guilty of high treason. Why does no one care?

Mothers Against Illegal Aliens are upset that their children are being slaughtered by illegal aliens. How is it that they are so ineffective in preventing this slaughter? How is it that pro-illegal-alien groups like LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens) and La Raza are so effective in promoting the illegal-alien invasion?

Destroying Strawberries

It was reported on 20 April 2010 that strawberry growers in Florida were destroying their crops, because the market has collapsed and they did not want to spend additional money to pick and transport them to market. What really upset people is that crops were being deliberately destroyed, when poor, hungry people could have eaten them. It was asked why the government does not subsidize the picking and transport of the berries.

The government has funneled most of the recent economic recovery money to rich bankers, who used it to pay themselves large bonuses, even though they were the main cause of the current recession. The government has subsidized banks, insurance companies, auto companies – all owned by the rich – but it refuses to subsidize food for the poor. Why? The government does not want citizens to have access to low-cost food or, worse yet, free food. It wants to make money on economic activity for its wealthy controllers. The main business of the US government is now creation of wealth for the wealthy masters of America. Its policies are guided by economics, which is the science of the management of scarcity. The scarcer things are, the higher their price, and the more income to the wealthy. The US government is in the pocket of the wealthy elite, and its policies are now focused on actions that will make the wealthy wealthier, no matter the pain and suffering caused to the poor and middle class, so long it stops short of causing revolution. The government will not tolerate giving free strawberries to anyone. That would result in lower profits for the wealthy. Keep those bastards hungry! Keep those bastards working!

RIP Hummer

On 25 May 2010 I heard that production of the Hummer automobile – the most egregious example of a gas-guzzling car – would be ended. Why was this vehicle ever produced? The world's oil reserves are finite, and the world has been running out of oil since the day it started pumping it out of the ground. It has been estimated that the petroleum age will last about 100 years, and that it is about half over. Why is the energy from oil not being used for worthwhile purposes, such as figuring out how to end the mass species extinction? Why is it being used in extravagantly wasteful fashion to run private automobiles, when much more efficient transportation systems are available, such as light rail and high-efficiency cities?

Instead of trying to conserve our energy resources, the government subsidizes programs to use as much petroleum energy as possible, e.g., via its subsidies to the US highway system. Why would the government do this? There are two very good reasons. The faster we consume the finite supply of petroleum energy, the scarcer it becomes, the higher its price goes, and the greater are the opportunities for the wealthy to manage scarcity. The government's primary

mission now is to generate vast wealth for the wealthy elite. This is accomplished by maximizing current economic growth (or activity). This objective is best accomplished by allowing an unrestricted flow of energy through the economic system (this is the second reason). Conserving petroleum resources would provide increased energy resources and economic opportunities for our descendents, but this would be at a cost (restriction, limitation) to the present generation of wealthy controllers of America. The wealthy elite do not care about future generations. They do not care that large human numbers and industrial activity are destroying the biosphere (i.e., causing a mass species extinction). They do not care about anything but their current hedonistic pleasure.

So why did the wealthy elite end production of the Hummer, when just a few years ago they started it? It was just one of their little toys. They have lost interest in it. It was perhaps a little embarrassing when California Governor Schwarzenegger paraded his, as the country headed for the greatest economic recession since the Great Depression. They will simply use the energy that would have been consumed by the Hummer in some other way. They will not willingly reduce the amount of petroleum consumption by one iota. They will consume all the world's petroleum resources, as fast as they possibly can.

Regression to the Mean

The nineteenth-century geneticist and statistician Francis Galton observed that the children of unusually tall people tended to be less tall, on average, than their parents. This phenomenon is called "regression to the mean." This phenomenon holds for any characteristic, not just height. It is the reason for some egregious failures in the field of evaluation research, where control groups were selected according to extreme values of a criterion, such as having a low income in a "baseline" year. The next year, the control group improved simply because income exhibits a lot of "random" variation – if you select people who have unusually low (or high) incomes in one year, then in the following year the group's average income will likely move toward the mean. This means that the low-income control group's average income may well rise in the following ("endline") year, simply because of the regression-to-the-mean artifact. In one notoriously famous program evaluation of the Head Start program, the control group outperformed the treatment group, simply because of the "regression effect."

America was founded by people who were very adventurous, brave, aggressive, optimistic, confident, hard-working and capable – they had fled the "Old World," seeking a better life. For all of these attributes, the Northern Europeans who settled America were, on average, better than average. After a few generations, without additional immigration of more-able people, the population "regresses to the mean." Later generations are, on average, not as capable, with respect to any measure on which their immigrant ancestors excelled. Recent generations of Americans have reflected this fact in starkly noticeable ways. They have allowed the country to be overrun by 12-20 million illegal-alien invaders, with hardly a peep. The founders of the United States wrested control of North America from the greatest empire in the world (the British Empire) and set up a government that was "of, by and for" the people. This was an incredible accomplishment. The American people managed to maintain control of this fabulous gift – a democratic republic – for over 100 years. Over the last 50 years, however, the wealthy elite have hijacked control of the government from the people. The government now serves the wealthy elite, not the people. The US citizenry allowed this to happen because it is now no more able than the "old" populations from which their ancestors fled.

Will the infusion of 12-20 million illegal aliens “save” the country by providing “new blood”? No, it will not. Most of the 12-20 million illegal aliens are simply average people from Mexico. Relatively few of them are unusually or exceptionally capable people, representing “extreme values” from their home populations.

There are some exceptions to the mass migration of ordinary people to the US. The most exceptional Northern Europeans no longer migrate to the US in substantial numbers, because their opportunities for material success are now as good in their home countries as here. Today, the exceptional products of other populations who migrate to America are mainly from very large and very poor Asian nations (such as India and China). Some exceptional people migrate from Eastern European and Middle-Eastern countries, but the numbers of immigrants from those countries is not nearly so large as from Asian nations.

The effect of the mass migration from large Asian nations is very apparent at the local level. Earlier this year my sister attended the graduation of her grandson from eighth grade. She was astounded that virtually all of the academic honors went to Asians – and there are very few Asians living in our town (Spartanburg, South Carolina). This is the way it is. In the 1940s our ancestors placed Japanese in internment camps as soon as the US was attacked by Japan. Today’s generation of Americans is giving the country away to Asians. This is ironic. It was aggressive Europeans who took America from its Asian inhabitants, and aggressive Asians are now in the process of taking it back.

Recent generations of Americans have squandered their birthright. They have given away the country that was founded for them and bequeathed to them by the nation’s founders. They now allow the invasion of their country by millions of aliens. They now grant “birthright” citizenship to all children born in the country, even those born to illegal aliens. Because of mass immigration, there is no longer any free land – the Land Office was closed in the late 1800s. Crowding is now so severe that land prices have skyrocketed, and the middle class no longer has reasonable access to America’s natural resources. It takes a year to reserve a camping space or a white-water raft trip in America’s national parks. This suits the wealthy elite and the economists just fine. Make everything scarce – big profits come from control and management of scarce resources. Overpopulate the country so that everything is expensive. The American people once had a beautiful country rich in natural splendor, with ready access to nature by almost any citizen, and they have given it away, simply to generate income for the wealthy.

Knowledge-Based Belief

You hear a lot these days about “faith-based” or “belief-based” initiatives. Many people appear to be proud to profess religious beliefs based solely on faith. Because they can provide no logical arguments to support their beliefs, they become angry when someone challenges them – even to the point of advocating “death to the unbelievers” or “death to apostates” or “death to anyone who ridicules or detracts from the faith.”

It seems to me that knowledge-based or experience-based beliefs have a lot more to recommend than beliefs that are based solely on faith. The major evidence in favor of a theory is its ability to predict. I have faith in the Rand-McNally Atlas, because, based on my own personal experience, it predicts very well. For decades, I have used it to find places on a map. In every instance, when I have visited a place described in the Rand-McNally Atlas, it has been

there. I have never heard anyone say that the Atlas indicated a country, state, or city was in a particular place, and when he went there it was not to be found.

I have read about Einstein's Theory of Relativity in books, and read about the experiments performed to test it, such as the detonation of atomic bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima. My Uncle Bob visited Nagasaki shortly after the detonation, and described the scene exactly as I have since seen in pictures. I have never encountered anyone who has uncovered any evidence that Einstein's Theory is false. (Uncle Bob, along with Uncle Frank, was captured at Hong Kong on Christmas Day, 1941, and served as a slave in Japanese coal mines until Spring of 1945. The Japanese government issued orders for the execution of all prisoners of war so they would not tell of their terrible treatment. Uncle Bob was on his last legs when the US dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Before the execution order could be carried out, the war was over.)

I have read Darwin's Theory of Evolution, and it appears to make a lot of sense, based on what I see around me. There are, of course, many things that it does not explain, such as existence or consciousness. Darwin's Theory fits a lot of facts, but there is no convincing way to test it, as there are for Einstein's Theory. It may be correct, or it may not be. In any event, it is a knowledge-based, not based on idle speculation.

As a statistician, I have faith in the theory of statistics. While I have proved many theorems of statistics, I certainly have not proved all of them, or even a small fraction of them. But I have relied on the body of statistical knowledge, even though I have not personally proved all of it, and I have experience-based faith that the body of statistics is sound. If the assumptions underlying a statistical model are true, then the model can be used to make useful predictions. This I believe. I have used my knowledge of statistics to make a good living. My clients have been generally satisfied with results.

From time to time I hear fundamentalist Christians assert that Darwin's Theory of Evolution is "just a theory." Well, that may be true, but at least it is a knowledge-based theory. Since it, like the "Big Bang" cosmological theory of the formation of the Universe, deals with very long time frames, I cannot test it, as I can the Rand-McNally Atlas.

A few weeks ago, two ladies came to my door to proselytize for a local church / religion. They used the Christian Bible as the basis for their arguments. They had no experience-based or logic-based arguments to offer. They offered no evidence that their beliefs – their "theory" – could be tested, either on the basis of logical argument or predictive ability. They were very pleasant and sincere, but they did not get very far.

Spend the Oil

It is painfully obvious from the government's response to the recent British Petroleum Gulf of Mexico oil spill that the government does not care what the environmental cost of extracting oil is. Even if not a single erg of net energy is realized from oil, the government would still drill for it, simply to fund economic activity. The governor of Louisiana (Bobby Jindal) suggested building massive berms around islands and along shores to protect them from future oil spills. It would suit the government just fine to expend all of the energy from Gulf oil simply in building berms and doing spill cleanups. The economic activity increases the wealth of the wealthy elite who control the country. All of the oil will eventually be spent in support of economic activity in

some way, and building berms or cleaning up spilled oil is as good a way to generate wealth as any. That is all that matters to our present government. What it is spent on – heating homes or cleaning up oil spills – doesn't matter. All that matters is the economic activity. Any economic activity.

The US government has approved the punching of thousands of holes in the Gulf, to seek for and extract oil (I heard 36,000, but have not verified this). Even now, in the wake of the recent Gulf oil disaster, it is still issuing new oil exploration permits. Why? In a few decades, all of the oil will be gone, and we will be right back where we started, except that our environment will have been degraded by the extraction process and the use of the energy (which destroys the environment, through its support of large human numbers and industrial activity). Stopping the environmental destruction associated with oil extraction may be accomplished simply by stopping oil extraction. This would appear to be a “no-brainer” – in the long run, extracting the oil makes us worse off. Why would the government do such a seemingly stupid thing? Why would it sacrifice the welfare of all future human beings and other species simply to continue the hedonistic pleasure of the current generation? Simple. The government serves the current generation of wealthy elite, who care only about themselves and no future human beings. The government does not care about the long-term consequences. It does not care that massive energy use is causing the Sixth Extinction of species (the extinction of an estimated 30,000 species per year because of human activity). All it cares about is generation of economic activity, income and wealth for the wealthy elite who control it.

I heard once that the total amount of oil spilled in the recent Gulf oil spill amounted to just one hour of consumption for the US. Could this be true? Is the US really willing to destroy so much wildlife just for one hour of hedonistic pleasure? Is this the face of evil?

I saw on television (19-20 June 2010) where British Petroleum chief executive officer Tony Hayward was vacationing at a yacht race during the peak of the Gulf oil spill caused by his company's oil rig. Why not? That's the capitalist system at work. Destroy nature in exchange for hedonistic pleasure. Hayward epitomizes the essence of the capitalist system. At the same time that Hayward was enjoying his \$720K yacht, President Obama and Vice President Biden, whose policies (allowing drilling in the Gulf) caused the oil spill, were also having a grand time on a golf course – and Obama had attended a baseball game in Washington the previous evening. Nero “fiddling” while Rome burns.

On May 29, 2010, I heard President Obama proclaim, in speaking about the Gulf oil spill, “The buck stops here. I will hold myself accountable to do whatever it takes to solve this problem.” What a lie. The President is not holding himself or anyone else in government accountable for anything. The oil-spill problem is easily solved by stopping all drilling in the Gulf. As long as drilling continues, oil leaks will occur. The President is a liar. I heard on June 1 that the government intended to prosecute the guilty to the fullest extent of the law. But the government that issues the leases to explore and drill is the ultimate guilty party, and no government officials are being prosecuted at all!

Obama Promised Change

All during his presidential race, Barack Obama promised change. I wrote a number of times that this was silly – that change in and of itself meant nothing. What matters is what we are changing to.

Now that Obama has assumed the presidency, it is clear what kind of change he had in mind. He has surrounded himself with Marxist socialists. The type of change that he had in mind was to move the country strongly in the direction of Marxist socialism. That is consistent with what he wrote in his books, which were published prior to the election.

Obama's platform and accomplishments while in office are quite consistent with his expressed political philosophy. The voters who elected Obama are now getting exactly what he told them in writing what he wanted for them. They are getting quite what they asked for. Why, then, is Obama's approval rating so low? He is delivering what he promised, and those who voted for him are getting just what they asked for.

Marx's original concept was that technological society would move from rural agricultural to industrial capitalist to socialist. The Russian experiment in communist socialism failed because Russia tried to skip the middle step, i.e., it attempted to move from rural agricultural directly to socialist, bypassing the industrial capitalist phase. Now that the US has completed the industrial capitalism phase, it is "ripe" for transition to the socialist / communist phase. Obama's Marxist mentors realize this, and they are working hard to bring it about. A major problem for Obama is that the US President is controlled by the wealthy elite (witness Obama's enthusiastic support for extending the "Bush" tax cuts, despite the fact that they are opposed by the mainstream Democratic Party), and they have no intention of moving away from capitalism, which benefits them obscenely. A difficulty for the wealthy elite, however, is that the US is losing much of its manufacturing base, and cannot continue to function independently a strong nation, having mainly a service economy with limited manufacturing. It would appear that the global economy could move to socialism (a global New World Order), but that the US as a separate nation without its own independent manufacturing base cannot currently do so.

No man can serve two masters. Obama must choose between serving the capitalist (fascist) rulers of America and the Marxist / socialist ideologues that surround him. (The descriptor "fascist" correctly applies to present-day America, in which the government serves business.) The balancing act cannot continue indefinitely. The problem that Obama faces at present is that if he clearly aligns with one side, the other will destroy him (and I mean "kill" him, not just abandon him or disgrace him). The stakes are very high, the situation is unstable, and the Marxists see the present time as a possibly singular opportunity to assume power. As the 2012 presidential election approaches, Obama will have to take sides, as both sides become nervous about the election outcome and press for a commitment. Since at present Obama's Marxist-socialist mentors have little political power (they temporarily hijacked the Democratic Party, but this situation is ephemeral), he will align with the business interests (as he did for the tax-cut extension). At that point, betrayed and jilted and with nothing to lose, the Marxists will destroy him. The capitalists, allowing no good crisis to go to waste, will use the opportunity to impose a strict fascist regime. As global petroleum production starts its long decline, economic conditions will worsen dramatically for the US population, and armed revolution will ensue. Foreign powers will move to take advantage of this situation, and large-scale global nuclear war will erupt. This will mark the end of the era of global industrialization. The "change" that Obama promised is to move the United States from capitalism to Marxist socialism – and the New World Order from capitalism to synarchy.

This is the change that Obama will bring about. This change will mark the end of capitalist imperialism. This is the "dream" from Obama's father.

Cashless Cabins

On two recent airline trips, the stewardess announced that snacks were for sale, but that this was a “cashless cabin,” and only major credit cards would be accepted for payment. I was surprised at this. It sounded illegal to me. All US paper currency contains the statement, “This note is legal tender for payment of all debts, public and private.” How, then, can the airline refuse to accept cash as payment for snacks? Is it because they can avoid the creation of a debt by refusing to provide snacks to anyone who does not first agree to pay for them with a credit card?

Abraham Lincoln Quotes

“If I had eight hours to chop down a tree, I'd spend six hours sharpening my ax.”

“You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong.”

“Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves.”

“As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy.”

“These capitalists generally act harmoniously and in concert, to fleece the people.”

“Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power.”

“Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak out and remove all doubt.”

“I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true. I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live by the light that I have. I must stand with anybody that stands right, and stand with him while he is right, and part with him when he goes wrong.”

“The time comes upon every public man when it is best for him to keep his lips closed.”

“I am a success today because I had a friend who believed in me and I didn't have the heart to let him down.”

“It often requires more courage to dare to do right than to fear to do wrong.”

US Design Life

In civil engineering, there is the concept of the “design life” of a structure, such as a building. When I was a boy, my home town of Spartanburg had a post office that had been built many years before. As I recall, it was a sturdy Greco-Roman structure. Its classic architecture inspired confidence and implied permanence. It was obvious that the people who built it planned for it to last a very long time. In the center of town was also a red-brick library built by Andrew Carnegie.

Both buildings are long gone now, replaced by “modern” buildings. The “new” post office building is located some blocks away. It is a one-story, nondescript building that, *sans* its sign, could pass for a small warehouse.

It is clear that the recent generations of America do not plan to be around very long. Extrapolating from the uninspiring public buildings that are now common, I would estimate that the “design life” of America is no longer than 20 years.

The new post office building is surrounded by parking lots. The public parking lot is in front of the building. If I were in charge, no building would be allowed to have a parking lot in front of it. Parking lots are ugly. They should be relegated to the backs of buildings. In front of the building should be a lawn, with trees and shrubs.

AIG Is Selling Credit Default Swaps Again?

One of the reasons underlying the recent recession was the profligate selling of complex financial derivatives by firms that the US government decided were “too big to allow to fail.” A derivative is a contract whose value “derives” from the value of some other asset. One type of derivative is a “credit default swap” (CDF) in which one party bets that an asset, such as a firm (or firm’s bonds) will default, and the other bets that it will not. The CDF is an insurance policy. A problem that led in part to the recession is that many large CDFs were contracted, so that the insurer could not possibly pay off in the event of default of many of them. A further problem is that the risk associated with CDFs is “correlated” – the events of default of different CDFs were not stochastically (statistically) independent. There was a significant probability that many CDFs would have to be “paid off” simultaneously. The possibility of a large-scale default was well known to the writers of CDFs. They simply chose to ignore this possibility (moral hazard inspired by the knowledge that the government would bail them out, as it did for the Savings and Loans in the 1980s). These financial instruments were a complete scam – there was no way they could be paid off in the event of a large-scale default. The government knew that this would happen, and that it would cover the losses of the losing party – it has already done this in the collapse and rescue of Long Term Capital Management, a decade ago, and in the collapse and rescue of the S&Ls before that.

When the recession began, many banks and insurance companies dealing in CDFs would have failed, since they could not pay off these insurance claims. The general policy of the US government was to cover these losses. If two wealthy people, firms, or organizations wish to gamble, that is fine, but when a bet is lost and one party does not have the bet covered, he should be allowed to fail – go bankrupt. Public money should not be used to bail him out. If the government’s plan was to bail out failing firms, it should have regulated them carefully, to make sure that the risk of this was very low and that the use of public money to rescue the firms was socially justified by a legitimate purpose. It should not have used taxpayer money to cover gambling bets between wealthy business people. It should cover losses only for insured banks, and highly regulate and monitor them to keep the risk of failure low (to minimize the chance that taxpayer money may have to be used to bail them out).

The government’s argument that it had to bail out the banks in order to restore liquidity is a complete lie. The banks simply took the money and sat on it, or used it to pay obscenely large bonuses to its managers – the very people who caused the economic crisis in the first place! If the government wanted to increase liquidity, it could have simply made loans to borrowers

directly, rather than give money to the banks, which had acted so criminally. The counter-argument to doing this is that the US prefers a private banking system. That is a complete laugh – when the chips are down, people are quite willing for the government to be involved. It is the government that provides bank-account insurance, and regulates banking. Every nation does this. It is the government that regulates the entire financial industry. The government controls, through legislation, our entire financial system. It did not take steps to increase liquidity because it wanted to take advantage of the liquidity crisis funnel trillions of dollars of taxpayer money to banks.

Why were public funds used to cover the bets of wealthy financiers who chose to engage in bets they could not possibly cover when they went bad? The reason is that the US is now (and has been for some time) a fascist dictatorship – a country in which the government and business work hand in hand.

The largest insurance company issuing CDFs was AIG. The government bailed out AIG to the tune of billions of dollars. On the May 11, 2010, edition of Glenn Beck's television program, it was reported that AIG was back in the business of selling CDFs. The CDF on Greece went up the preceding day, it was reported. When will this madness end?

US President Pimps

Ever US President since President Dwight Eisenhower has allowed mass immigration to the country. This mass immigration has diminished and degraded our environment and culture. It has reduced our level of security and decimated our social cohesion. The population has doubled since Eisenhower's term, with the result that property prices have skyrocketed and ordinary people no longer have reasonable access to natural land, such as national parks, lakes near their homes, and beaches. The government's policy of overpopulation has decreased security – both at the national and personal levels – and raised prices for access to nature to high levels. Since Eisenhower, all US Presidents have served as pimps, prostituting the nation's natural resources in exchange for the economic benefits associated with mass migration.

The Dream Act

My wife and I attended a party last Saturday evening (11 December 2010), and at one point we were seated at a table with two other people. Most of the conversation was "small talk." Small talk suits parties just fine. It is non-controversial, and appropriate. I guess that's why I find parties boring, and rarely attend them. (Also, drinking makes me sleepy, and it is even more boring to be with other people on whom it has a different effect.) As a general rule, I try to avoid talking about politics and religion at social gatherings. This leaves out a lot of topics – even cosmology – and makes it difficult to find common topics of interest. I am reminded of Eleanor Roosevelt's observation that intelligent people talk about ideas, people of average intelligence talk about current events, and below-average people talk about each other.

Well, at one point the lady across from me happened to mention the so-called "Dream Act," in which the US government proposes to award citizenship to people who were brought to the country illegally by their parents, and she asked me what I thought about it. As you know, I

have written frequently on the topic of illegal immigration, and at this point, I couldn't keep silent. I told the lady that if it were up to me, I would declare all of these people to have the citizenship of their mothers, and deport them immediately. For good measure, I added that I would strip all "birthright citizenship" from all children born of illegal aliens, and deport them all immediately to the nations of their mothers. Their citizenship was obtained through fraud and criminal actions, and should not be allowed to stand. The lady expressed surprise at what I had said, and said something to the effect that she did not want to be unkind to anyone. I told her that repelling illegal invasions was not "being unkind to someone," but simply executing the laws of this – and every other – country. I mentioned that the US President and other high officials had taken vows to defend the country from invasion, and that, by aiding and abetting the invasion of the country by 12-20 million illegal aliens, they were guilty of high treason for not doing so.

Well, this really started the discussion. She asserted rather strongly that this was really being mean to people, and not what Jesus would do. My wife mentioned that I often asked, in considering difficult issues, "What would Jesus do." I cited the Golden Rule ("Do unto others what you would have them do to you"), and said that if I illegally invaded another country I would expect exactly the same treatment I was proposing. Since the lady had used religion in her argument (most people in this area are Southern Baptists or Presbyterians), I started to quote the Old Testament. She immediately responded that she did not believe the Old Testament. I then pointed out that immigration was a matter for the state, and cited Jesus' (New Testament) statement, "Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's, and unto the Lord what is the Lord's".

Well, this didn't convince her, and the argument continued. I pointed out that more US citizens were killed by illegal aliens than soldiers killed in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Other people at the party were beginning to notice the spirited conversation. I guess that I was really getting "revved up," because at one point I mentioned to her my "One-hundred dollar solution to the illegal immigration problem": Pass a law giving all illegal aliens a month to leave the country, and make illegal immigration a capital crime. Then, for any who remain, hang one a day on a wooden scaffold using a rope. Within a week or so, all of them would be gone. Because illegals would no longer be present in our country in large numbers to kill and maim US citizens on a large scale, the number of deaths caused by the illegal-immigration problem would actually be dramatically reduced.

At this point, the lady expressed surprise and unbelief. My wife "excused herself to go to the lady's room." I got up to get dessert. Someone took my wife's chair. Several other people stopped by our table, but the conversation shifted to "normal party topics."

On our way home, I expressed regret to my wife at having become engaged in discussing politics and religion at the party. As it turns out, the same lady has already invited us to another party this Friday night. What to do? Perhaps I should mention D. H. Lawrence's book, *Apocalypse and the Writings on Revelation* (Cambridge University Press 1931, Penguin Book edition 1995), in which Lawrence (also the author of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*) argues that no state can possibly be Christian, since it cannot "turn the other cheek" and continue to survive (page 73). That should convince her.

Government Arrogance

I shall never forget Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi's remark that if people wanted to see what was in a major bill (it was either the health care bill or the financial bailout bill), they would

have to pass it first. This is one of the most arrogant statement I have ever heard – it ranks with Marie Antoinette’s apocryphal remark “Let them eat cake.”

On the July 22, 2010, edition of his Fox News television program, Glenn Beck commented on the new finance law – 2,300 pages in length – that Obama had just signed. In signing it, Obama asserted that never again would taxpayer money be used to bail out failed financial institutions. Beck pointed out that we did not need a two-thousand page law to accomplish this.

Beck is right. The government created the crisis, through its lax regulation of the financial industry – especially of government-insured banks, but also of “shadow” banking operations: Allowing banks to write absurdly risky derivatives in absurd amounts; Bailing out banks (and other firms) that were deemed “too large to fail”; Allowing banks to give mortgage loans to grossly unqualified people (“NINJA” loans (no income, no jobs, no assets) and “liar” loans (no verification of income or assets)); Allowing “slice and dice” securitization of mortgage loans.

As Rahm Emmanuel once observed, let no good crisis go to waste. Through its policies of lax regulation, the government caused the financial crisis (the stock-market and housing “bubbles”). It is now making good use of it to further its program of control. Unfortunately, it has not addressed the fundamental problem that caused the crisis: inadequate regulation of banking (all banking – real and “shadow” – not just the currently insured ones).

Ben Bernanke and Monetization of the US Debt

For quite some time, Ben Bernanke, chairman of the Federal Reserve, asserted that the Fed would not monetize the massive US government debt (i.e., in effect “print money” (or create it in computer accounts) to buy back government bonds). On August 10, 2010, after a year of asserting this, he announced that the US government would indeed monetize the debt.

On his television program, Glenn Beck reported that the total amount to be monetized was 2.6 trillion dollars – with a tranche of 600 billion at present. Beck observed that this action was reminiscent of the Weimar Republic, and warned that printing massive amounts of money would lead to massive inflation. So far, it has led to some inflation, but not at all massive inflation. A principal reason for this is the high level of unemployment.

Katrina Five Years Later

It is now five years after the Hurricane Katrina incident, and nothing is changed. New Orleans is still vulnerable to destruction after the next big hurricane strikes. The government knew that this would happen the first time (it had a Corps of Engineers report predicting this), and it knows it will happen again. Why does the government do this? Simple. The rebuilding of a destroyed New Orleans generates lots of economic activity. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) goes up. It is the same as if you go next door to your neighbor’s house and smash his windshield – the GDP increases by the \$200 required to replace it. GDP is our government’s primary measure of success. Also, the wealth of the wealthy elite, who do the rebuilding and repair, increases. The pain and suffering of the people who suffer the anticipated loss is irrelevant to the government. Their loss of income and assets is irrelevant. All that matters is the income and wealth of the

wealthy elite who control the government. That's capitalism at work. That's our government. That's our system.

Economics Is the Science of Scarcity

Economics is the science of scarcity. It is the science of managing scarce resources. In the US, it is the science of maximizing income and wealth for the wealthy elite who control the country. Our system is growth-based economics, and it is effected via debt-based money and interest.

The primary tool by which the government raises the level of scarcity (apart from rapid economic growth) is population growth. By 1973, US population growth had dropped to near zero. The birth rate for both whites and blacks had dropped to replacement level. This situation was anticipated by the government, and a response was passage of the Immigration Act of 1965. This act opened the floodgates of immigration to foreign cultures around the world. Even this was not sufficient to satisfy its venal masters, so the government started allowing mass immigration of illegal aliens. It is said that a king's glory is in his population. This is so true. Overpopulation makes everything scarce, except human misery.

US population has doubled from 150 million when I was young to over 300 million now. In the late 1800s, land was free. At that time, the population – well under 100 million – could be supported by solar energy. That is very much no longer the case. As global petroleum production begins to decline noticeably, US population will plummet, back to the levels that can be supported by solar energy – and by the damaged biosphere that remains after the ongoing human-caused Sixth Extinction. (The US can support about 30-60 million people under solar-based agriculture, and on the order of a million hunter-gatherers on a long-term-sustainable basis. The US population passed 31 million people in 1860, 39 million in 1870, 50 million in 1880 and 63 million in 1890. When the US government closed the Land Office in the 1880s, the population had just passed 50 million.)

Even when I was a boy, there were still some natural places that people could enjoy for free. I had a schoolmate (Bill Dugan) who didn't get along with his parents. Whenever things got to him, he simply left home for a while and lived off the land. You can't do this anymore. The government has made sure of that. Virtually all available land near cities is now occupied. The really nice land (mountain lakes, ocean beaches) is out of reach for most people, except the wealthy.

US Government Destroys Manufacturing

My wife and I purchased a cedar chest this morning (13 December 2010), in response to some recent moth attacks on our clothing. (Actually, the chest is made of juniper wood (*juniperus virginiana*), which is referred to as Eastern red cedar in this part of the United States (the Southeast). As we were driving home, we passed a large textile mill – long closed. My home town of Spartanburg was a busy textile town in the 1950s, when I attended high school. Now, all of the textile mills are closed. My wife asked me how this came about.

I told her that it was a US government decision. The US government pushed for low tariffs on international trade, even when other countries achieved low cost through low-cost labor, environmental destruction, or unfair trade practices such as “dumping.” At first this happened with low-technology products such as textiles, shoes, ceramics and furniture. Later, it included high-tech products such as automobiles, cameras and consumer electronics (televisions, microwaves, refrigerators, video cameras, video recorders, computers). Instead of imposing tariffs to equalize foreign costs with US costs, thereby preserving our manufacturing base, the US government simply watched as the US manufacturing capacity in all of these areas was lost to foreign countries, such as Japan and Taiwan in the beginning, and many others, such as Korea, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Bangladesh. The US government, through its actions, has destroyed the US manufacturing base, which provided meaningful work to many of its citizens, who are now unemployed or on the dole.

I told her about the destruction of the US television industry by Japan. Originally, all television sets in the US were US-made. The Japanese then started to produce acceptable-quality television sets. They had two tremendous advantages. They had much lower labor costs. Also, they would sell the products to their large domestic market at a high price and sell to the US at a low price. Eventually, they drove all US television makers out of business. This happened in all areas of consumer electronics. It also happened to a substantial extent with automobiles. The Japanese passed a law forbidding its own citizens to sell a used car. Used cars could only be exported. In fact, I purchased one of these cars when I lived in Zambia. (See <http://www.japanusedautomobiles.com/> or many similar Internet websites for information about this.)

I told my wife that if I were in charge, tariffs would be imposed on all foreign goods to the extent needed to equalize labor and environmental costs and discriminatory pricing (e.g., selling cars domestically for less than for export). Under these conditions, the US would still be a strong manufacturing power, and not have a trade deficit with China. (Actually, I would go much further than that, to prohibit all trade that is not necessary for military purposes. The ultimate effect of most trade and travel is simply an increase in economic activity, with resultant long-term damage to the environment.)

No Pork on Air France

I was on an Air France flight a few weeks ago from Paris to Ougadougou. Before the meal was served, I was handed a small card that said, “Air France garantit ce repas sans viande de porc. Air France guarantees that this meal does not contain pork.”

I like pork. It is my favorite meat. I am offended that Air France, to accommodate its Moslem and Jewish customers, denies me pork.

What is the problem with pork? I can understand that in earlier times, it may have been desirable to restrict consumption of pork, for fear of contracting trichinosis. But that time is long past. Times have changed. It is time to move on. Human society now knows how to produce disease-free pork. I object strongly to having my diet restricted because of the dietary preferences of others – particularly those in the minority! Let them not eat pork, if they so desire, but please don’t mess with my meal.

While I am on the topic of international air travel, let me point out that I also object to being subjected to intense inspection at airports simply because of US government policies that allowed for open borders, mass immigration, massive international free trade and travel, and provision of training in flying of large planes to terrorists. If the US government had not pursued these policies, the 9/11 attack on the Twin Towers would not have happened. When I was young, virtually all passengers on US airplanes were US citizens of Northern European culture. It is much easier to guarantee security for an ethnically homogeneous nation, than for one overrun by foreigners. In World War II, the US Army used the shibboleth “lollapalooza,” which could not be pronounced by Japanese soldiers.

As a statistician, I know that racial profiling is a very efficient – and fair – way to apprehend criminals (Bayesian decision rules). This practice has been banned by the US government, since its prohibition results in increased economic activity. It will not ban any practice that diminishes economic activity. That is why it will not reduce mass immigration, open borders, massive international free trade and travel. Some people have been criticized for stating that the US government caused the 9/11 attack. While it did not drive the airplanes into the Twin Towers and the Pentagon, its ridiculous policies led directly to the attacks. While the US government may not have directly carried out the attack, it is directly responsible for the attack.

Just prior to the Thanksgiving holidays, body imaging scanners were introduced in about 70 US airports. People were given the option of submitting to the imaging scanners or to aggressive pat-downs. Many people objected to both. It was amusing to hear one lady, interviewed on the Today show, state that she would be much happier if profiling were used to promote airport safety.

The fact that thousands of lives were lost in the 9/11 attack is not a concern to the US government. It had a similar response to Hurricane Katrina. One of the government’s own research studies showed that New Orleans would be destroyed by a large hurricane, yet it chose to do nothing about this. Why? Because the economic activity generated by ignoring the problem was far greater than the economic activity associated with taking preventive measures. The fact that lots of people lost their lives or endured suffering is not a consideration for the government. All that matters is the level of economic activity and generation of wealth for the wealthy elite who control the government.

The Ultimate Weapon of Mass Destruction

Growth-based economics is the ultimate weapon of mass destruction. It is the root cause of the human-caused sixth mass species extinction now in progress. Growth-based economics, debt-based money and interest. Within a few hundred years, it can destroy a planetary ecosystem.

What a system! It is perhaps the greatest system ever conceived for building things. Greed is an incredible motivator for most people, both slaves and masters. Slaves under threat of death do not work nearly as hard or creatively as “free” men (economic slaves) who are allowed to retain a substantial portion of the product of their work. The only problem is that this system is not stable. It can only grow, until it runs out of some critical resource, such as space, energy, or water. When it ceases to grow, it collapses. Exponential-growth (geometric-growth) systems are like explosions, and explosions do not last very long (the “Big Bang” being a possible exception). The essential resource of the current global economic system is fossil-fuel energy. As this energy source depletes, the system will “crash and burn.” (Actually, it will crash and

burn even if some other alternative energy source were found to replace fossil fuels, since the large human numbers and industrial activity enabled by massive energy availability is causing the destruction of the biosphere in which we live – the Sixth Mass Species Extinction.)

The current system of growth-based economics is about to collapse. We are passing “Hubbert’s Peak” on “Hubbert’s Curve” – the point where global oil production is peaking. Yet the politicians cry only for continued growth. On television this morning (14 December 2010), President Obama was quoted as saying, with respect to the pending bill to extend the “Bush” tax cuts, “The country needs this bill to make the economy grow.” Grow, grow, grow. That is all politicians and economists care about (with the exception of a few “steady-state” economists such as Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen (author of *The Entropy Law and the Economic Process* (Harvard University Press, 1971, 1999)), Herman E. Daly (author of *Beyond Growth* (Beacon Press, 1996)) and John B. Cobb, Jr. (with Daly, author of *For the Common Good* (Beacon Press, 1989, 1994))). I recently read two interesting books about the current Great Recession – Joseph E. Stiglitz’ *Free Fall: America, Free Markets, and the Sinking of the World Economy* (W. W. Norton, 2010) and Paul Krugman’s *The Return of Depression Economics and the Crisis of 2008* (W. W. Norton, 2009, 1999). These books – particularly Stiglitz’ – were quite interesting (I will summarize them in a later Miscellany), but all they are concerned with is economic growth. Growth-based economics has a stranglehold on the planet. It would have worked fine for a short time, to accomplish great materialist strides, but it is like a heroin addiction that the world can’t shake, even though it is quickly destroying the planet’s ecosystem. It will soon collapse (and I don’t mean in ten or twenty years – I mean within the next few years).

The Cost of the Economic Stimulus

I heard recently the comparison that economic stimulus packages of the past two years have cost more than the war in Iraq did in seven years. Most of this was paid to banks and insurance companies, little to individuals. The banks are a costlier enemy of the people than the war in Iraq.

This Real Issue Is Immigration, not Illegal Immigration

On both CNN and Fox television (e.g., Lou Dobbs, Glenn Beck), I have heard commentators state many times that the principal issue of concern is not immigration, but *illegal* immigration. This is hogwash. The principal issue is mass immigration, from whatever source. Granted, illegal immigration has the additional drawback that it shows that the US government refuses to defend the country from invasion, but it is mass immigration from all sources that is destroying US culture and the environment, taking up space, and destroying the quality of life for most US citizens.

The Value of Experience

During the campaigning for the midterm (2010) elections, it was said of Kathy O’Donnell, who was running for the US Senate in Delaware, that she had no experience. But the incumbent Senators have lots of experience, and they are the ones who caused the current Great Recession.

The Pope in London

On 17 September 2010, I heard a news report in which the Pope made the statement, in response to the recent pedophile scandal in the Catholic Church, that the Church wants a safe environment for children. This is a deceitful, disingenuous statement. The facts speak for themselves. By its actions in condoning and covering up the pedophile scandal, the Catholic Church has demonstrated amply that it cares about its power and reputation far more than it cares about children.

RIP Incandescent Light Bulbs

I heard in September 2010 that the US is planning to disallow the sale of incandescent light bulbs by 2012. When I was in Australia in 2006, I heard that Australia had already done this. I heard that the last incandescent light bulb manufacturing plant in the US, owned by General Electric, was closing its doors.

The US is planning to replace incandescent light bulbs with fluorescent light bulbs. I cannot stand fluorescent bulbs. I find their harsh, strobe light unpleasant. I much prefer the soft, slightly yellow, continuous light of incandescent lights – reminiscent of candles. Fluorescent lights are very dangerous and harmful to the environment (they contain mercury). I read recently that if you accidentally break one in your home, it should be decontaminated.

The reign of fluorescent bulbs will not last long. They are expected to be replaced in about ten years with light-emitting diodes.

The demise of incandescent light bulbs shows how increasing population ruins everything. Someone once noted that if population is under control, all problems are solvable, but if it is out of control, none of them are. When I was young, quality furniture was solid walnut. Then it was solid cherry. Then it was solid mahogany. All at affordable prices. Now, affordable furniture is chip-board or veneer. Economics does not care about quality – only about making money for the wealthy.

The De-development of America

On September 21, 2010, Glenn Beck reported that a government official, John Holdren, had called for the de-development of America. In the future, Americans would have to be content with a lower level of living. This would allow the rest of the world to achieve a higher level of living.

For the past three decades, the quality of life has been declining noticeably for middle-class Americans. This is the result of overpopulation. A small population can live very well, but a large population cannot.

The Not-Invented-Here (NIH) Syndrome

America suffers from the “not-invented-here” (NIH) syndrome. While it has invented a vast array of fabulous devices, such as television, the computer chip and the video-cassette recorder, it is very reluctant to adopt technology invented elsewhere. DNA testing was used in Britain to solve crimes long before it was used in the US. When radial tires were introduced by the French tire maker Michelin, they were derided by US tire makers – for years, American tire makers lied that bias-ply tires were just as good. The public saw right through this lie, and American tire makers eventually were forced to mass-produce radial tires. The US government maintained for years that sealed-beam automobile headlights were “better” than the small-bulb headlights used in Europe. Sealed-beam headlights are now ancient history. A very long time ago, Russian medical doctors introduced the process of lengthening stunted limbs by attaching mechanical stretchers on patients’ bones. US doctors had no effective alternative treatment, but resisted the use of this technique for decades. Glucosamine and chondroitin were used for many years in Europe to treat arthritis, but US doctors pooh-pooed its use. Eventually, they gave in and admitted the value of this simple low-cost treatment.

Eugenics in the US

You hear a lot of politicians publically express disdain for eugenics. It is fine for improving breeding stock of plants and animals, but not appropriate for use in human populations. Eugenics was practiced by a number of economically developed countries well into the twentieth century. Its major proponent at the present time is the United States. It has imprisoned about five percent of the black US male population, versus less than one percent of the white male population. The incarceration rate for black women is about four times that for white women.

Infanticide

When I was a boy, a father was expected to suffocate a defective newborn infant, if the doctor or midwife did not do so. Recently, Virginia Ironside of Britain stated during a television interview that she would do this, as an act of kindness, to prevent great suffering. Her comment caused quite a stir. How things have changed.

(For those of you who are not familiar with Ms. Ironside, here is an excerpt from Wikipedia: “Virginia Ironside is a British journalist who writes the "Dilemmas" column for The Independent and a monthly column for The Oldie. Her book Chelsea Bird was published at the age of twenty, she wrote a rock column in the 1960s for the Daily Mail.

“Ironside received considerable attention after her appearance on BBC1's religious discussion programme, Sunday Morning Live in 2010. She stated ‘If a baby's going to be born severely disabled or totally unwanted, surely an abortion is the act of a loving mother.’ and added ‘If I were the mother of a suffering child - I mean a deeply suffering child - I would be the first to want to put a pillow over its face... If it was a child I really loved, who was in agony, I think any good mother would.’ Though some viewers supported Ironside, many complaints were registered on the programme's website message board.”)

Botswana Genocide

I read recently where the Botswana government has taken steps to destroy the San (“Bushman”) culture and exterminate the San race, by relocating all Bushmen from their traditional lands.

Where Does Obama Stand?

US President Obama has been criticized for refusing to hold his hand over his heart during the Pledge of Allegiance, and for leaving out the phrase “by their Creator” from the Declaration of Independence (“endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights”). Why did he do this?

A Quick Solution to the US Unemployment Problem

There are an estimated 12-20 million illegal aliens presently in the US. The current US unemployment rate is about 9.5 percent, or about 15 million people. If we would immediately deport all illegal aliens, a substantial number of jobs would be freed up. The assertion that illegal aliens are doing jobs that Americans are unwilling to do is irrelevant. US citizens need work. The practice of allowing illegal aliens to invade the country in massive numbers is treason – the US President and other high officials take an oath to defend the country from invasion. This practice is destroying US culture and the environment, not to mention killing and maiming large numbers of US citizens.

Eschatology

Christian and Moslem “End Times” beliefs appear to be similar on the surface, but in fact they are quite different in one respect. Christians believe that in the Last Days the world will be destroyed and the Messiah will return. Moslems believe that the initiation of a global war between Christians and Moslems will precipitate the return of the 12th Imam. This fact is often cited as the reason why Iran appears so enthusiastic about waging war with Israel – to precipitate global war.

Word Meanings

You often hear the word “forte” (as in “that’s not my forte”) pronounced as “forté.” A few days ago, I heard a newscaster pronounce “cache” (as in “weapons cache”) as “cachet” (a mark or quality of distinction). What is this world coming to, when newscasters, whose primary tool is the English language, speak so poorly.

In a related vein (note to Glenn Beck), the accent on “redistributive” is on the “tri”, not on the “bu”. And (note to Sarah Palin) “refudiated” is not a recognized word – does it mean “repudiated,” or “refuted,” or both?

Today's (14 December 2010) Yahoo News contained an interesting article, "U.S. military angers Iran by calling Persian Gulf 'Arabian Gulf,'" by Michael Dykes. The article closes with the sentence, "Perhaps the U. S. military subscribes to the thinking of Mark Twain, who said, 'The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug.'"

No Free Lunch

A nation cannot incur a long-term trade deficit for long. In the long term, a financial balance will be maintained. Either it will sell sufficient goods to bring the trade balance back into balance, or it will lose its capital assets.

America now manufactures substantially less than it consumes, so that it has mounted a large trade deficit with China. America does not produce goods and services that the Chinese want in exchange for its manufactured goods. The piper will soon claim his due. Shortly, you will see a massive takeover of US capital assets (firms, infrastructure) by the Chinese (or anyone holding a trade surplus with the US).

Memory

Recent articles on memory explain that it is simply a physical process involving neurons and synapses, and that each time you recall a memory, it is changed. Apart from storage as states in biological brains, does the universe have any memory? Do the Akashic Records exist? Does time exist (apart from an aspect of the space-time continuum)? What is the nature of consciousness? Is consciousness changing / evolving, as Jean Gebser speculates (in *The Ever-Present Origin* (Ohio University Press, 1985) – very difficult reading!)?

Fish Oil

I heard recently that the massive taking of fish-oil pills is depleting the stocks of the ocean fish from whom the oil is extracted.

Killing an Elk

My grandson recently went on an elk hunt, and, after two days of hunting, failed to bag an elk. He telephoned to tell my wife, his grandmother, the results. Rather presumptuously, I told him that she would be pleased to hear that he had failed to kill an elk. When she arrived home, I told her of my telephone conversation, and she told me that she would not disapprove of his shooting an elk. I pointed out that there were only a few million elk in the world, and that if every adult male human being killed one, they would be made extinct. She agreed.

I saw a news clip recently (December, 2010) of Sarah Palin killing a caribou. She was evidently excited and pleased to do this – it was not done simply as her reluctant duty to "put food on the table." A month or so ago I saw a clip of her clubbing several halibut fish to death. As she

turned to do this, she muttered something like, “I’d better calm these little critters down” – I didn’t quite hear it exactly.

Human overpopulation ruins everything. A man – or woman – can no longer experience the thrill of killing an elk, since extrapolating this activity to the entire human race means the certain extinction of all elk.

The Anti-Missile System

I heard on 12 February 2010 that the airborne laser for destroying missiles in the boost phase (shortly after launch) had just been successfully tested. That is very interesting. I used satellite lasers as the basis for destroying missiles in my 1980 book, *MX*. Just 30 years later, and the system is ready to go.

The Iraq War

The US initiated the war in Iraq to obtain access to Iraq’s oil, but when this became infeasible, it simply continued the war anyway, because it generated much economic activity. Eventually, as year after year of slaughter of US troops continued, the US public grew restive. At that point, the war activity was shifted to Afghanistan. The US public is now growing restless over that war, and it, too, will draw to a close before long. Where will the next war be? I wrote an article once suggesting that it would take place in Nigeria. Time will tell. (One advantage of a war in Nigeria is that the casualty rate would be substantially lower than in Iraq or Afghanistan. We could wage war in Nigeria for many years before the public would object to the casualties.)

US Housing Policy

For a number of years, the US government encouraged the granting of home mortgages to unqualified persons. It then allowed the banks who offered these unsound mortgages to immediately unload them (“flip” them) on Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. It allowed complex (“slice and dice”) securitization of housing loans, so that no one could refinance or restructure – ownership of the loans was so completely muddled that foreclosure was the only legally-feasible option. The home owners lost everything, and the banks were then reimbursed for their losses using public money (the so-called “toxic asset” recovery program).

Having caused untold misery by its nefarious policies, the US government then turned to giving first-time home owners an \$8,000 credit. The beauty of this program is that it created on the order of ten times as much debt as the credit extended. The government did similar things with the “cash for clunkers” program and programs to encourage “energy saving” home improvements (insulation, windows, heating / cooling systems) and electric cars or golf carts. Anything to create debt. Our economic system is growth-based economics using debt-based money and interest. If debt collapses, the money collapses, and growth ceases. Under this system, saving is bad and debt is good. Go figure!

The Free Will Imperative

New Agers declare that there is a “free will imperative” under which spiritual beings are proscribed from controlling the will of human beings. This is ridiculous. Human beings control each other in the physical plane, and mental beings control human beings in the spiritual plane.

To Do Good

A recent (9 March 2010) American Express television ad (for the American Express Members' Project) asserted, “To do good, you actually have to do something.”

Repeal MLK Day

When I was young, we celebrated George Washington's birthday and Abraham Lincoln's birthday. Now we celebrate Presidents' Day and Martin Luther King's birthday. Why would we replace celebration of the country's founding father and the man who preserved the Union with celebration of a moral reprobate? Martin Luther King Day should be repealed.

Affirmative Action

Under Affirmative Action, a firm that does not have racial distribution of employees similar to that of the general population is assumed *de facto* to be guilty of racial discrimination, and must prove itself innocent. Affirmative Action was supposed to achieve equality of opportunity, but it was immediately perverted as a means to equality of outcome. In tax court, similarly, one is assumed guilty of charges levied by the government until he proves his innocence. Under English common law, one is assumed innocent until proved guilty. It is sad that the US has abandoned this legal framework, which served us so well for so long.

Millennium Challenge Corporation

The US Millennium Challenge Corporation provides billions of dollars to foreign governments for the purpose of reducing poverty through economic growth. This approach is not sustainable – it is destroying the biosphere. A much better (long-term-sustainable) approach to reducing human misery is to reduce poverty through population reduction.

Cap and Trade

The so-called Cap and Trade arrangement, under which wealthy nations would transfer money to poor nations in exchange for their rights to pollute, is a massive boondoggle. The total amount of pollution will be essentially unchanged. This global income-transfer program simply enables additional economic activity, and causes faster damage to the biosphere.

World War II: A Preview of Things to Come

Psychics say that World War II and Adolf Hitler was simply a rehearsal for things to come. They say that today's books and movies about the supernatural (e.g., Harry Potter, Avatar, Golden Compass, Narnia) are preparation for the coming planetary transformation.

Carter Criticizes Kennedy

While being interviewed about his recent book (September, 2010), former President Jimmy Carter criticized the late Senator Edward Kennedy for having sabotaged Carter's plans for universal health care, because he did not want Carter to get credit for it. Kennedy wanted that glory for himself.

Our Best Minds?

On 20 May 2010 I heard Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar state that the country's best minds were focused on stopping the Gulf oil spill. This is so absurd. If the country cared anything about preventing oil spills in the Gulf, they would not drill for oil in the Gulf. Why does the government do this – allow actions that will result in massive and irreparable environmental damage? Simple. It generates lots of economic activity to clean up the messes.

The American Way

During the mid-term elections, I saw a political ad on television (on 5 November 2010) telling the story of a politician (Matt Varney (?)) who purchased some land, improved it, got the local government to finance the development with seven million dollars in municipal bonds, got out ("flipped" the property), the development failed, and taxpayers are now left holding the bag. The American way. Socialize the costs and privatize the benefits. This is how George Bush and George Steinbrenner made millions of dollars at public expense. Why does the US public put up with this, over and over again?

Relocating Iraqis to the US

I heard recently where the US government is relocating Iraqis to the US, under some program designed to reduce human misery. It did the same thing for Vietnamese and Cambodians. It relocated a number of Hmong to my home town of Spartanburg, and all of the dogs in that neighborhood quickly disappeared.

As global oil production starts to decline, millions of Americans will starve to death. For each Iraqi, Vietnamese, Cambodian or Hmong refugee here, an American will have to die. What is the good purpose in this?