

memoration in 1886, noting how Jefferson Davis addressed the audience “with rage and occasional outbursts of savage beauty . . . and with sudden exclamations of invincible hatred, like a toothless and enfeebled mastiff who bares his gums at his enemy.” (As a senator, Davis advocated the acquisition of Cuba and visited Havana before and after the War Between the States.)

Martí remained preoccupied with Cuba during his American years, serving as interim president of the New York-based Cuban Revolutionary Committee and cofounder of the Cuban Revolutionary Party in Key West in 1892. When Martí perceived ambitions of *caudillismo* in fellow revolutionary General Máximo Gómez, he broke with him in 1884. Martí made clear in a letter to Gómez his

determination not to contribute by one iota, out of blind love for the idea that is consuming my life, to bringing a regime of personal despotism to my land, a regime that would be even more shameful and calamitous than the political despotism it now endures, and more serious and difficult to eradicate, because it would be excused by certain virtues, and established upon an idea which it embodied, and legitimized by triumph.

And so Martí prefigures Cuba since 1959; *Fidelismo* has been the sanguinary fulfillment of his worst apprehensions. In duration and severity, Castro dwarfs the *caudillos* Martí fled. Castro, of course, claims to act in defense of national independence, the Sovietization he inflicted upon Cuba notwithstanding.

Martí was a crusader after perils. He wrote his mother at 16 that imprisonment “has given me plenty of lessons for my life, which I foresee will be very short”; in 1895, he wrote to her of “my growing and necessary agony” and “a life that loves sacrifice.” Martí returned to Cuba that year to participate in the war for independence he had organized. On May 19, in the eastern province of Oriente, he fatally rode into Spanish troops. Martí had been in Cuba a little over a month.

Frederick Douglass observed in 1862 that “Men have strange notions nowadays as to the manner of showing their respect for the heroes of the past.” Cuba’s present master class shares such strange notions. On one side, there is the man

who advocated republicanism and the rights of man; on the other, an autocrat of 43 years who systematically violates those rights. Fidel Castro has said that José Martí is the “intellectual author” of his regime. No; but he will be the intellectual author of Cuba’s emancipation from Castro.

Myles Kantor is the editor of FreeEmigration.com and a columnist for Front Page Magazine.

Eat, Drink, and Be Merry

by Jeremy Lott

Nicotine Theological Journal

edited by John R. Muether and D.G. Hart

Oviedo, FL: Press; 8 pp., \$3.00 per issue, \$7.00 for an annual subscription

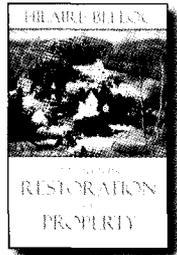


The inaugural editorial of the *Nicotine Theological Journal* (January 1997) took a few fun swipes at teetotalers and scolds (including Al Gore), who admittedly, in the words of Garrison Keillor, “live longer, but they live dumber.” “The sun,” the editors quoted C.S. Lewis as saying, “looks down on nothing half so

good as a household laughing together over a meal, or two friends talking over a pint of beer, or a man alone reading a book that interests him.” They appropriated this sentiment as “Reformed wisdom” about the “simplicity and depth of creature comforts” (Hear, hear!) and announced that they would consider joining the likes of the Christian Coalition only *after* that body began proposing laws to protect such comforts.

Alas, coeditors John R. Muether and D.G. Hart—librarians at the Reformed Theological and Westminster Theological seminaries, respectively—also cautioned that their eight-page quarterly “is not a Reformed version of *Cigar Aficionado*.” They would not devote pages to “cultivating yuppie trappings,” though each and every issue does feature a brief “Second Hand Smoke” reflection on the “virtues and delights” of consuming tobacco and alcohol, reprinted from such authors as John Updike and Michael Kelly.

Rather, the NTJ promised to be a theological journal in a very unusual sense. Sponsored by the Old Life Theological Society, it would concern itself not so much with exegetical and theological minutiae but with “the God ordained means of grace as well as the habits and sensibilities that articulate, cultivate and reinforce orthodoxy.” This was to be primarily a journal of theology as it works itself out in the everyday lives of old-school Reformed Christians (“old lifers”), from the liturgical calendar to the relatively



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harsh interpretations of the Second and Fourth Commandments (in the Reformed numbering, on idolatry and the Sabbath) to their more robust views on Christian liberty in other matters (hence the title).

Six years later, the NTJ can be judged only a partial success in adhering to its mandate, though non-Reformed readers will think it more worthwhile for the deviations. Hart and Muether have indeed published dozens of articles by themselves and by a small roster of contributors on such topics as whether or not worship should consist exclusively of Psalms (yes), what it means to keep the Sabbath (don't work; go to church), and whether or not the phrase "God bless America" constitutes taking the Lord's Name in vain (an uncharacteristic maybe). And these articles on Reformed practice do not go uncommented upon by outsiders. A recent NTJ cover essay pleading Christian liberty in defense of the "humble condom," for instance, got Fr. Richard John Neuhaus's knickers in a twist. "You know I like *Nicotine Theological Journal*" he wrote in his column in the back of *First Things* in February, but he judged this "little article" to be "unpleasant and

just plain dumb." He also accused it of taking a "cheap shot" at the sexual aspect of Catholic moral tradition by pointing out that it has been developed mostly by celibates. (The authors, Zach and Derry Kausashian, related that St. Thomas Aquinas argued masturbation was a sin only slightly less grave than murder but worse than rape, because "masturbation prohibits the possibility of sexual activity from reaching its end.")

But the real fun comes when these Reformed, being Reformed, depart from their mandate and begin to pick at the broader Christian world. Vigorous opponents of ecumenism, they have mocked such efforts with great aplomb ("Presbyterians and Quakers Together"), taken swipes at such magazines as *Books & Culture* ("annoying") and *Touchstone* ("muddled"), and even touched off a few shots at Pope John Paul II (represents a "kinder gentler" Roman Catholicism; gave "the papacy a happy face"). Most of this dissension is carried off with an admirable touch of pith and vinegar, so that even those who regularly disagree with the authors' assessments—and, as an ecumenical Baptist contributor to *Books & Culture* and *Touchstone*, I would usually include

myself in that category—can appreciate their contrarian cussedness, even if it occasionally leaves us hot under the collar.

This little magazine can also have its almost sweet moments. In an editorial in 1998, the editors of NTJ confessed that being traditional Presbyterians sets them at odds with their cultural surroundings—secular and religious—to an astounding degree. Hart, Muether, and the rest of the crew resist the various calls to ecumenism, since what they see "underneath these expressions of Christian faith" is "the Enlightenment's hostility to tradition, history, and particularity." "We feel like the ethnic Americans who are being forced to assimilate to the demands of a melting-pot Christianity. If we retain our distinctive ways, we will be [seen as] un-American or, worse, Amish."

After reading a few issues, I doubt whether anyone would make *that* mistake.

(Single issues of the *Nicotine Theological Journal* can be purchased for three dollars, cash or check. Subscriptions are seven dollars for one year, sent to 1167 Kerwood Circle, Oviedo, FL 32765.)

Jeremy Lott is the 2002 Burton C. Gray Memorial Intern for Reason magazine.

WILL FUTURE GENERATIONS READ *Chronicles*?

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by Samuel Francis

Hate, Inc.

No sooner had victory in Afghanistan by the forces of Truth, Beauty, and Global Democracy been announced and the still uncaptured and undecapitated Osama bin Laden declared by President Bush to be “unimportant” (no doubt the reason the administration put a \$25-million reward on his head last fall) than the top-ranking officials of the U.S. government informed the nation that terrorist attacks within the United States were a virtual certainty. On May 19, Vice President Cheney told *Meet the Press*, “The prospects of a future attack on the United States are almost certain. Not a matter of if, but when.” The very next day, FBI Director Robert Mueller told a gathering of district attorneys in Washington that suicide bombings and other terrorist attacks inside the United States were “inevitable,” that “there will be another terrorist attack,” and “we will not be able to stop it.” And the day after that, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld told a Senate committee that terrorists will “inevitably” gain control of “weapons of mass destruction” and will not hesitate to use them against us. For all the administration’s chest-thumping about the glory of driving the mad mullahs of the Taliban from the field of battle, it might seem that a certain degree of skepticism about the scope and meaning of our “victory” is in order.

The officials who pronounced their solemn warnings were probably correct, and, certainly, for a nation that has insanely allowed some 30 million aliens from the most backward portions of the globe to settle here in the course of the last three decades, terrorist attacks are the least that we should expect. In a study released in May, the Center for Immigration Studies in Washington found that no fewer than 48 foreign-born radical Muslims have been implicated in terrorism in this country since 1993 and that they

have manipulated almost every possible means of admission to the United States: Some have indeed come as students, tourists, and business travelers; others, however, have been Lawful Permanent Residents and naturalized U.S. citizens; while yet others have snuck across

the border, arrived as stowaways on ships, used false passports, been granted amnesty, or been applicants for asylum.

A week or so later, *U.S. News and World Report* detailed the profiles of “more than three dozen American jihadists, many of them previously unknown” and many of whom “are U.S. citizens, native born or naturalized,” though “a fair number are African-Americans, who make up nearly one-third of the nation’s Muslims.”

The arrest of native-born American Jose Padilla, now known as “Abdullah al Muhajir,” on charges of plotting with Al Qaeda to deploy a nuclear bomb in the United States, points to the same phenomenon, as does the estimate of terrorism expert Peter J. Brown, who says there may be as many as “1,500 to 2,000 American passport-carrying recruits who have shown up in the ranks of al Qaeda in the past decade.” President Bush was right: Osama bin Laden is not particularly important, and neither is Afghanistan. What’s important, and a threat to the nation, are the alien hordes that the Open Borders lobby has insisted on importing into this country through the immigration policy it has succeeded in dictating against the wishes of most Americans.

Rather belatedly, then, the administration last spring began taking steps to deal with what is now rather fetchingly known as “homeland security”: not only the creation of yet another behemoth government agency at the Cabinet level, larger than any other department save the Pentagon, with a budget of \$37 billion, 170,000 employees, and combining 22 existing federal agencies, but also the long-sought “unleashing” of the FBI a week or so before by the abolition of the attorney general’s guidelines for domestic security and terrorism investigations. Given the magnitude of the threat as estimated by administration officials and the internal location of the threat as indicated by the figures provided, the government buildup and crackdown might seem entirely justified. In fact, however, it will do little to deal with the real and existing internal security threat but much to endanger what



remains of American political freedom and dissent, especially from the ideological right.

The creation of the so-called Department of Homeland Security ought to speak for itself, and indeed, congressional criticism of the proposed department concentrated on the claim that it didn’t go far enough, that it had no intelligence-gathering powers of its own, and that both the FBI and the CIA should be absorbed within it. Doing so would complete the evolution of what could only be called an “American Gestapo,” an agency that would, in fact, dwarf the secret police of the German National Socialist government and approach being able to swallow the rest of the federal government itself. There is no reason whatsoever to believe that creating such an agency would improve federal counter-terrorist policies or reduce the threat of terrorism, internal or external, in any way.

It is the abolition of the attorney general’s guidelines for FBI investigations, however, that are of more interest than yet another sequel to the never-ending epic of the governmental Frankenstein. Imposed in 1976 by Gerald Ford’s attorney general, Edward Levi, the guidelines were intended to curb the supposed “excesses” of the Bureau of that and earlier eras (when it actually carried out essential functions of national security by spying on communists and other enemies, harassing subversives, and surveilling such known security risks as Martin Luther King, Jr.). Some of the Bureau’s domestic security activities, such as J. Edgar Hoover’s personal animosity toward the Ku Klux Klan and other opponents of the “civil-rights movement,” did indeed go too far, and in one case an FBI undercover agent seems to have instigated the actual murder of a “civil-rights worker”; but Hoover himself annually and publicly re-