

Ron Paul's

Speeches And Statements

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A Republic, If You Can Keep It

Statement of HON. RON PAUL OF TEXAS

1. Introduction

The dawn of a new century and millennium is upon us and prompts many to reflect on our past and prepare for the future. Our nation, divinely blessed, has much to be thankful for. The blessings of liberty resulting from the republic our forefathers designed have far surpassed the wildest dreams of all previous generations.

The form of government secured by the Declaration of Independence, the American Revolution, and the Constitution is unique in history and reflects the strongly held beliefs of the American Revolutionaries.

At the close of the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia on September 18, 1787, a Mrs. Powel anxiously awaited the results, and as Benjamin Franklin emerged from the long task now finished, asked him directly: "Well Doctor, what have we got, a republic or a monarchy?" "A republic if you can keep it" responded Franklin.

The term republic had a significant meaning for both of them and all early Americans. It meant a lot more than just representative government and was a form of government in stark contrast to pure democracy where the majority dictated laws and rights. And getting rid of the English monarchy was what the Revolution was all about, so a monarchy was out of the question.

The American Republic required strict limitation of government power. Those powers permitted would be precisely defined and delegated by the people, with all public officials being bound by their oath of office to uphold the Constitution. The democratic process would be limited to the election of our leaders and not used for granting special privileges to any group or individual nor for defining rights.

Federalism, the binding together loosely of the several states, would serve to prevent the concentration of power in a central government and was a crucial element in the new Republic. The authors of the Constitution wrote strict limits on the national government and strove to protect the rights and powers of the states and the people.

Dividing and keeping separate the legislative, executive, and the judiciary branches, provided the checks and balances thought needed to preserve the Republic the Constitution created and the best way to preserve individual liberty.

The American Revolutionaries clearly chose liberty over security, for their economic security and their very lives were threatened by undertaking the job of forming a new and limited government.

Most would have been a lot richer and safer by sticking with the King. Economic needs or desires were not the driving force behind the early American patriotic effort.

The Revolution and subsequent Constitution settled the question as to which authority should rule man's action: the individual or the state. The authors of the Constitution clearly understood that man has free will to make personal choices and be responsible for the consequences of his own actions. Man, they knew, was not to be simply a cog in a wheel, or a single cell of an organism, or a branch of a tree, but an individual with a free will and responsibility for his eternal soul as well as his life on earth. If God could permit spiritual freedom, government certainly ought to permit the political freedom that allows one to pursue life's dreams and assume one's responsibilities. If man can achieve spiritual redemption through grace, which allows him to use the released spiritual energy to pursue man's highest and noblest goals, so should man's mind, body, and property be freed from the burdens of unchecked government authority. The Founders were confident that this would release the creative human energy required to produce the goods and services that would improve the living standards of all mankind.

Minimizing government authority over the people was critical to this endeavor. Just as the individual was key to salvation, individual effort was the key to worldly endeavors. Little doubt existed that material abundance and sustenance came from work and effort, family, friends, church, and voluntary community action, as long as government did not obstruct.

No doubts were cast as to where rights came from. They came from the Creator, and if government could not grant rights to individuals, it surely should not be able to take them away. If government could provide rights or privileges, it was reasoned, it could only occur at the expense of someone else or with the loss of personal liberty in general. Our constitutional Republic, according to our Founders, should above all else protect the rights of the minority against the abuses of an authoritarian majority. They feared democracy as much as monarchy and demanded a weak executive, a restrained court, and a handicapped legislature.

It was clearly recognized that equal justice and protection of the minority was not egalitarianism. Socialism and welfarism were never considered.

The colonists wanted to be free of the King's oppressive high taxes and burdensome regulations. It annoyed them to no end that even the trees on their own property could not be cut without the King's permission. The King kept the best trees for himself and his shipbuilding industry. This violation of property ownership prompted the colonists to use the pine tree on an early revolutionary flag to symbolize the freedom they sought.

The Constitution made it clear that the government was not to interfere with productive non-violent human energy. This is the key element that has permitted America's great achievements. It was a great plan; we should all be thankful for the bravery and wisdom of those who established this nation and secured the Constitution for us. We have been the political and economic envy of the world. We have truly been blessed. The Founders often spoke of "divine providence" and that God willed us this great nation. It has been a grand experiment, but it is important that the fundamental moral premises that underpin this nation are understood and maintained. We as Members of Congress have that responsibility.

This is a good year to address this subject. The beginning of the new century and millennium provides a wonderful opportunity for all of us to dedicate ourselves to studying and preserving these important principles of liberty.

2. Success of the Republic

One would have to conclude from history as well as current conditions that the American Republic has been extremely successful. It certainly has allowed the creation of great wealth with a large middle class and many very wealthy corporations and individuals. Although the poor are still among us, compared to other parts of the world, even the poor in this country have done quite well.

We still can freely move about, from town to town, state to state, and job to job. Free education is available to everyone, even for those who don't want it nor care about it. Both the capable and the incapable are offered a government education. We can attend the church of our choice, start a newspaper, use the Internet, and meet in private when we choose. Food is plentiful throughout the country and

oftentimes even wasted. Medical technology has dramatically advanced and increased life expectancy for both men and women.

Government statistics are continuously reaffirming our great prosperity with evidence of high and rising wages, no inflation, and high consumer confidence and spending. The US government still enjoys good credit and a strong currency in relationship to most other currencies of the world. We have had no trouble financing our public or private debt. Housing markets are booming, and interest rates remain reasonable by modern-day standards. Unemployment is low. Recreational spending and time spent at leisure are at historic highs. Stock market profits are benefiting more families than ever in our history while income, payroll, and capital gains taxes have been a windfall to the politicians who lack no creative skills in figuring out how to keep the tax-and-spend policies in full gear. The American people accept the status quo and hold few grudges against our President.

The nature of a republic and the current status of our own are of little concern to the American people in general. Yet there is a small minority, ignored by political, academic, and media personnel, who do spend time thinking about the importance of what the proper role for government should be. The comparison of today's government to the one established by our Constitution is a subject of deep discussion for those who concern themselves with the future and look beyond the fall election. The benefits we enjoy are a result of the Constitution our Founding Fathers had the wisdom to write. However, understanding the principles that were used to establish our nation is crucial to its preservation and something we cannot neglect.

3. The Past Century

Unbelievable changes have occurred in the 20th Century. We went from the horse and buggy age to the space age. Computer technology and the Internet have dramatically changed the way we live. All kinds of information and opinions on any subject are now available by clicking a few buttons. Technology offers an opportunity for everyone who seeks the truth to find it, yet at the same time, it enhances the ability of government to monitor our every physical, communicative, and financial move. And let there be no doubt, for the true believers in big government, they see this technology as a great advantage for their cause.

We are currently witnessing an ongoing effort by our government to develop a national ID card, a medical data bank, a work data bank, "Know Your Customer" regulations on banking activities, a National Security Agency all-pervasive telephone snooping system called Echelon, and many other programs. There are good reasons to understand the ramifications of the many technological advancements we have seen over the century to make sure that the good technology is not used by the government to do bad things.

The 20th Century has truly been a century of unbelievable technological advancement. We should be cognizant of what this technology has done to the size and nature of our own government. It could easily be argued that, with greater technological advances, the need for government ought to decline and private alternatives be enhanced. But there's not much evidence for that argument. In 1902 the cost of government activities at all levels came to 7.7% of the GDP; today it's more than 50%.

Government officials oversee everything we do from regulating the amount of water in our commodes to placing airbags in our cars, safety locks on our guns, and using our own land. Almost every daily activity we engage in is monitored or regulated by some government agency. If one attempts to just avoid government harassment, one finds himself in deep trouble with the law.

Yes, we can be grateful that the technological developments in the marketplace over the last 100 years have made our lives more prosperous and enjoyable, but any observant person must be annoyed by the ever-present "Big Brother" that watches and records our every move. The idea that we're responsible for our own actions has been seriously undermined. And it would be grossly misleading to argue that the huge growth in the size of government has been helpful and necessary in raising the standard of living of so many Americans. Since government cannot create anything, it can only resort to using force to redistribute the goods that energetic citizens produce. The old-fashioned term for this is "theft." It's clear that our great prosperity has come in spite of the obstacles that big government places in our way and not

because of it. And besides, our current prosperity may well not be as permanent as many believe.

Quite a few major changes in public policy have occurred in this century. These changes in policy reflect our current attitude toward the American Republic and the Constitution and help us to understand what to expect in the future. Economic prosperity seems to have prevailed, but the appropriate question asked by too few Americans is, "Have our personal liberties been undermined?"

Taxes are certainly higher. A federal income tax of 35 to 40% is something many middle-class Americans must pay, while on average they work for the government for more than half the year. In passing on our estates from one generation to the next, our "partner," the US government, decides on its share before the next generation can take over. The estate tax certainly verifies the saying about the inevitability of death and taxes. At the turn of the century we had neither, and in spite of a continuous outcry against both, there's no sign that either will soon be eliminated.

Accepting the principle behind both the income and the estate tax concedes the statist notion that the government owns the fruits of our labor, as well as our savings, and we are permitted by the politicians' "generosity" to keep a certain percentage. Every tax-cut proposal in Washington now is considered a "cost" to government, not the return of something rightfully belonging to a productive citizen. This principle is true whether it's a 1% or a 70% income tax. Concern for this principle has been rarely expressed in a serious manner over the past 50 years. The withholding process has permitted many to believe that a tax rebate at the end of the year comes as a gift from government. Because of this, the real cost of government to the taxpayer is obscured. The income tax has grown to such an extent and the government is so dependent on it that any talk of eliminating the income tax is just that, talk.

A casual acceptance of the principle behind high taxation, with an income tax and an inheritance tax, is incompatible with a principled belief in a true Republic. It is impossible to maintain a high tax system without the sacrifice of liberty and an undermining of property ownership. If kept in place, such a system will undermine prosperity, regardless of how well off we may presently be.

In truth, the amount of taxes we now pay compared to 100 years ago is shocking. There is little philosophic condemnation by the intellectual community, the political leaders, or the media of this immoral system. This should be a warning sign to all of us that, even in less prosperous times, we can expect high taxes and that our productive economic system will come under attack. Not only have we seen little resistance to the current high tax system, it has become an acceptable notion that this system is moral and is a justified requirement to finance the welfare/warfare state. Propaganda polls are continuously cited claiming that the American people don't want tax reductions. High taxes, except for only short periods of time, are incompatible with liberty and prosperity.

We will, I'm sure, be given the opportunity in the early part of this next century to make a choice between the two. I am certain of my preference.

There was no welfare state in 1900. In the year 2000 we have a huge welfare state, which continues to grow each year. Not that special-interest legislation didn't exist in the 19th Century, but for the most part, it was limited and directed toward moneyed interests--the most egregious example being the railroads.

The modern-day welfare state has steadily grown since the Great Depression of the 1930s. The federal government is now involved in providing health care, houses, unemployment benefits, education, food stamps to millions, plus all kinds of subsidies to every conceivable special-interest group. Welfare is now part of our culture, costing hundreds of billions of dollars every year. It is now thought to be a "right," something one is "entitled" to. Calling it an "entitlement" makes it sound proper and respectable and not based on theft. Anyone who has a need, desire, or demand and can get the politicians' attention will get what he wants, even though it may be at the expense of someone else. Today it is considered morally right and politically correct to promote the welfare state. Any suggestion otherwise is considered political suicide.

The acceptance of the welfare ethic and rejection of the work ethic as the accepted process for improving one's economic conditions are now ingrained in our political institutions. This process was started in earnest in the 1930s, received a big boost in the 1960s, and has continued a steady growth, even

through the 1990s, despite some rhetoric in opposition. This public acceptance has occurred in spite of the fact that there is no evidence that welfare is a true help in assisting the needy. Its abject failure around the world where welfarism took the next step into socialism has even a worse record.

The transition in the past hundred years from essentially no welfare to an all-encompassing welfare state represents a major change in attitude in the United States. Along with its acceptance, the promoters have dramatically reinterpreted the Constitution from the way it had been for our first 150 years. Where the general welfare clause once had a clear general meaning (which was intended to prohibit special-interest welfare, and was something they detested and revolted against under King George), it is now used to justify any demand of any group, as long as a majority in Congress votes for it.

But the history is clear and the words in the Constitution are precise. Madison and Jefferson in explaining the general welfare clause left no doubt as to its meaning.

Madison said: "With respect to the words 'general welfare,' I have always regarded them as qualified by the detail of power connected with them. To take them in a literal and unlimited sense would be a metamorphosis of the Constitution into a character which there is a host of proofs not contemplated by its creators." Madison argued that there would be no purpose whatsoever for the enumeration of the particular powers if the general welfare clause was to be broadly interpreted. The Constitution granted authority to the federal government to do only 20 things, each to be carried out for the benefit of the general welfare of all the people. This understanding of the Constitution, as described by the Father of the Constitution, has been lost in this century.

Jefferson was just as clear, writing in 1798, when he said: "Congress has not unlimited powers to provide for the general welfare but only those specifically enumerated."

With the modern-day interpretation of the general welfare clause, the principle of individual liberty and the doctrine of enumerated powers have been made meaningless. The goal of strictly limiting the power of our national government as was intended by the Constitution is impossible to achieve as long as it is acceptable for Congress to redistribute wealth in an egalitarian welfare state. There's no way that personal liberty will not suffer with every effort to expand or make the welfare state efficient. And the sad part is that the sincere efforts to help people do better economically through welfare programs always fail. Dependency replaces self-reliance while the sense of self worth of the recipient suffers, making for an angry, unhappy, and dissatisfied society. The cost in dollar terms is high, but the cost in terms of liberty is even greater, but generally ignored, and in the long run, there's nothing to show for this sacrifice.

Today, there's no serious effort to challenge welfare as a way of life, and its uncontrolled growth in the next economic downturn is to be expected. Too many citizens now believe they are "entitled" to monetary assistance from the government anytime they need it, and they expect it. Even in times of plenty, the direction has been to continue expanding education, welfare, and retirement benefits. No one asks where the government gets the money to finance the welfare state. Is it morally right to do so? Is it authorized in the Constitution? Does it help anyone in the long run? Who suffers from the policy? Until these questions are seriously asked and correctly answered, we cannot expect the march toward a pervasive welfare state to stop, and we can expect our liberties to be continuously compromised.

The concept of the Doctrine of Enumerated Powers was picked away at in the latter part of the 19th Century over strong objection by many constitutionalists. But it was not until the drumbeat of fear coming from the Roosevelt administration, during the Great Depression, that the courts virtually rewrote the Constitution by a reinterpretation of the general welfare clause. In 1936 the New Deal Supreme Court told Congress and the American people that the Constitution is irrelevant when it comes to limits being placed on congressional spending. In a ruling justifying the Agricultural Adjustment Act, the Court pronounced: "The power of Congress to authorize appropriations of public money for public purposes is not limited by the grants of legislative power found in the Constitution." With the stroke of a pen, the courts amended the Constitution in such a sweeping manner that it literally legalized the entire welfare state, which not surprisingly, has grown by leaps and bounds ever since. Since this ruling, we have rarely heard the true explanation of the general welfare clause as being a restriction of government power, not a

grant of unlimited power.

We cannot ignore corporate welfare, which is part of the problem. Most people think the welfare state involves only giving something to the unfortunate poor. This is generally true, but once the principle is established that special benefits are legitimate the moneyed interests see the advantages in influencing the legislative process. Our system, which pays lip service to free enterprise and private-property ownership, is drifting toward a form of fascism or corporatism, rather than conventional socialism. And where the poor never seem to benefit under welfare, corporations become richer.

But it should have been expected that once the principle of favoritism was established, the contest would be over who has the greatest clout in Washington. No wonder lobbyists are willing to spend \$125 million per month influencing Congress! It's a good investment. No amount of campaign finance reform or regulation of lobbyists can deal with this problem.

The problem lies in the now-accepted role for our government. Government has too much control over people and the market, making the temptation and incentive to influence government irresistible and to a degree necessary. Curtailing how people spend their own money or their right to petition their government will do nothing to help this influence peddling. Treating the symptoms and not the disease only further undermines the principles of freedom and property ownership.

Any serious reforms or effort to break away from the welfare state must be directed as much at corporate welfare as routine welfare. Since there's no serious effort to reject welfare on principle, the real conflict over how to divide what government plunders will continue. Once it's clear that the nation is not nearly as wealthy as it appears, this will become a serious problem, and it will get the attention it deserves.

Preserving liberty and restoring constitutional precepts are impossible as long as the welfare mentality prevails, and that will not likely change until we've run out of money. But it will become clear, as we move into the next century, that perpetual wealth and the so-called balanced budget, along with an expanding welfare state, cannot continue indefinitely. Any effort to perpetuate it will only occur with the further erosion of liberty.

The role of the US government in public education has changed dramatically over the past 100 years. Most of the major changes have occurred in the second half of this century. In the 19th century, the closest the federal government got to public education was the Land Grant College program. In the last 40 years, the federal government has essentially taken charge of the entire system. It is involved in education at every level through loans, grants, court directives, regulations, and curriculum manipulation. In 1900 it was of no concern to the federal government how local schools were run at any level.

After hundreds of billions of dollars, we have yet to see a shred of evidence that the drift toward central control over education has helped. By all measurements, the quality of education is down. There are more drugs and violence in the public schools than ever before. Discipline is impossible out of fear of lawsuits or charges of civil rights violations.

Controlled curricula have downplayed the importance of our constitutional heritage while indoctrinating our children, even in kindergarten, with environmental mythology, internationalism, and sexual liberation. Neighborhood schools in the early part of the 20th Century did not experience this kind of propaganda.

The one good result coming from our failed educational system has been the limited but important revival of the notion that parents are responsible for their children's education, not the state. We have seen literally millions of children taken from the public school system and taught at home or in private institutions in spite of the additional expense. This has helped many students and has also served to pressure the government schools into doing a better job. And the statistics show that middle-income and low-income families are the most eager to seek an alternative to the public school system.

There is no doubt that the way schools are run, how the teachers teach, and how the bills are paid is dramatically different from 100 years ago. And even though some that go through public schools do exceptionally well, there is clear evidence that the average high school graduate today is far less educated than his counterpart was in the early part of this century.

Due to the poor preparation of our high school graduates, colleges expect very little from their

students, since nearly everyone gets to go to college who wants to. Public school is compulsory and college is available to almost everyone regardless of qualifications. In 1914, English composition was required in 98% of our college; today it's about one-third. Only 12% of today's colleges require mathematics be taught, where in 1914, 82% did. No college now requires literature courses. But, rest assured plenty of social-babble courses are required as we continue to dumb down our nation.

Federal funding for education grows every year, hitting \$38 billion this year, \$1 billion more than requested by the administration and 7% over last year. Great congressional debates occur over the size of a classroom, student and teacher testing, bilingual education, teacher's salaries, school violence, and drug usage. And it's politically incorrect to point out that all these problems are not present in the private schools. Every year there is less effort at the federal level to return education to the people, the parents, and the local school officials. For 20 years at least, some of our presidential candidates advocated abolishing the Department of Education and for the federal government to get completely out of the public education business. This year we will hear no more of that. The President got more money for education than he asked for, and it's considered not only bad manners but also political suicide to argue the case for stopping all federal government education programs. Talk of returning some control of federal programs to the state is not the same as keeping the federal government out of education as directed by the Constitution.

Of the 20 congressionally authorized functions granted by the Constitution, education is not one of them. That should be enough of a reason not to be involved, but there's no evidence of any benefit, and statistics show that great harm has resulted. It has cost us hundreds of billions of dollars, yet we continue the inexorable march toward total domination of our educational system by Washington bureaucrats and politicians. It makes no sense!

It's argued that if the federal funding for education did not continue education would suffer even more. Yet we see poor and middle-class families educating their children at home or at a private school at a fraction of the cost of a government school education, with results fantastically better--and all done in the absence of violence and drugs. A case can be made that there would be more money available for education if we just left the money in the states to begin with and never brought it to Washington for the bureaucrats and the politicians to waste. But it looks like Congress will not soon learn this lesson, so the process will continue and the results will get worse.

The best thing we could do now is pass a bill to give parents a \$3,000 tax credit for each child they educate. This would encourage competition and allow a lot more choice for parents struggling to help their children get a decent education.

The practice of medicine is now a government-managed care system, and very few Americans are happy with it. Not only is there little effort to extricate the federal government from the medical-care business, but the process of expanding the government's role continues unabated. At the turn of the 19th Century, it was not even considered a possibility that medical care was the responsibility of the federal government. Since Lyndon Johnson's Great Society programs of the 1960s, the role of the federal government in delivering medical care has grown exponentially. Today the federal government pays more than 60% of all the medical bills and regulates all of it. The demands continue for more free care at the same time complaints about the shortcomings of managed care multiply. Yet it's natural to assume that government planning and financing will sacrifice quality care. It is now accepted that people who need care are entitled to it as a right. This is a serious error in judgment.

There's no indication that the trend toward government medicine will be reversed. Our problems are related to the direct takeover of medical care in programs like Medicare and Medicaid. But it's also been the interference in the free market through ERISA mandates related to HMOs and other managed-care organizations, as well as our tax code, that have undermined the private insurance aspect of paying for medical care. True medical insurance is not available. The government dictates all the terms.

In the early stages patients, doctors, and hospitals welcomed these programs. Generous care was available with more than adequate reimbursement. It led to what one would expect: abuse, overcharges, and overuse. When costs rose, it was necessary through government rulemaking and bureaucratic

management to cut reimbursement and limit the procedures available and personal choice of physicians. We don't have socialized medicine, but we do have bureaucratic medicine, mismanaged by the government and select corporations who usurped the decision-making power from the physician. The way medical care is delivered today in the United States is a perfect example of the evils of corporatism, an artificial system that only politicians responding to the special interests could create.

There's no reason to believe the market cannot deliver medical care in as efficient a manner as it does computers, automobiles, and televisions. But the confidence is gone and everyone assumes, just as it is in education, that only a federal bureaucracy is capable of solving the problems of maximizing the number of people, including the poor, who receive the best medical care available. In an effort to help the poor, the quality of care has gone down for everyone else and the costs have skyrocketed.

Making generous medical savings accounts available is about the only program talked about today that offers an alternative to government mismanaged care. If something of this sort is not soon implemented, we can expect more pervasive government involvement in the practice of medicine. With a continual deterioration of its quality, the private practice of medicine will soon be gone.

Government housing programs are no more successful than the federal government's medical and education programs. In the early part of this century, government housing was virtually unheard of. Now the HUD budget commands over \$30 billion each year and increases every year. Finances of mortgages through the Federal Home Loan Bank, the largest federal government borrower, is the key financial institution pumping in hundreds of billions of dollars of credit into the housing market, making things worse. The Federal Reserve has now started to use home mortgage securities for monetizing debt.

Public housing has a reputation for being a refuge for drugs, crimes, and filth, with projects being torn down as routinely as they are built. There's every indication that this entitlement will continue to expand in size, regardless of its failures. Token local control over these expenditures will do nothing to solve the problem. Recently the Secretary of HUD, using public funds to sue gun manufacturers, claimed this is necessary to solve the problem of crime which government housing perpetuates. If a government agency, which was never meant to exist in the first place under the Constitution, can expand their role into legislative and legal matters without the consent of Congress, we indeed have a serious problem on our hands. The programs are bad enough in themselves, but the abuse of the rule of law and ignoring the separation of powers makes these expanding programs that much more dangerous to our entire political system and is a direct attack on personal liberty.

If one cares about providing the maximum and best housing for the maximum number of people, one must consider a free-market approach in association with a sound non-depreciating currency. We have been operating a public housing program directly opposite to this, and along with steady inflation and government promotion of housing since the 1960s, the housing market has been grossly distorted. We can soon expect a major downward correction in the housing industry, prompted by rising interest rates.

Our attitudes toward foreign policy have dramatically changed since the beginning of the century. From George Washington through Grover Cleveland, the accepted policy was to avoid entangling alliances. Although we spread our wings westward and southward as part of our manifest destiny, in the 19th Century we accepted the Monroe Doctrine notion that Europeans and Asians should stay out of our affairs in this hemisphere and we theirs. McKinley, Teddy Roosevelt, and the Spanish American War changed all of that. Our intellectual and political leaders at the turn of the last century brought into vogue the interventionist doctrine setting the stage for the past 100 years of global military activism.

>From a country that once minded its own business, we now find ourselves with military personnel in more than 130 different countries, protecting our modern-day American empire. Not only do we have troops spread to the four corners of the earth, we find Coast Guard Cutters in the Mediterranean and around the world, our FBI in any country we choose, and the CIA in places the Congress doesn't even know about.

It is a truism that the state grows and freedom is diminished in times of war. Almost perpetual

war in the 20th Century has significantly contributed to steadily undermining our liberties while glorifying the state. In addition to the military wars, liberty has also suffered from the domestic "wars" on poverty, literacy, drugs, homelessness, privacy, and many others.

We have, in the last 100 years, gone from the accepted and cherished notion of a sovereign nation to one of a globalist, New World Order. As we once had three separate branches of our government, the United Nations proudly uses its three branches, the World Bank, the IMF, and the World Trade Organization to work their will in this new era of globalism. Because the US is by far the strongest military industrial power, it can dictate the terms of these international institutions, protecting what we see as our various interests such as oil, along with satisfying our military industrial complex. Our commercial interests and foreign policy are no longer separate. This allows for subsidized profits, while the taxpayers are forced to protect huge corporations against any losses from overseas investments. The argument that we go about the world out of humanitarian concerns for those suffering-which was the excuse for bombing Serbia-is a farce.

As bad as it is that average Americans are forced to subsidize such a system, we additionally are placed in greater danger because of our arrogant policy of bombing nations that do not submit to our wishes. This generates the hatred directed toward America, even if at times it seems suppressed, and exposes us to a greater threat of terrorism, since this is the only vehicle our victims can use to retaliate against a powerful military state.

But even with the apparent success of our foreign policy and the military might we still have, the actual truth is that we have spread ourselves too thinly and may well have difficulty defending ourselves if we are ever threatened by any significant force around the world. At the close of this century, we find our military preparedness and morale at an all-time low. It will become more obvious as we move into the 21st Century that the cost of maintaining this worldwide presence is too high and cutbacks will be necessary. The cost in terms of liberties lost and the unnecessary exposure to terrorism are difficult to determine, but in time it will become apparent to all of us that foreign interventionism is of no benefit to American citizens, but instead is a threat to our liberties.

Throughout our early history and up to World War I, our wars were fought with volunteers. There was no military draft except for a failed attempt by Lincoln in the Civil War, which ended with justified riots and rebellion against it. The attitudes toward the draft definitely changed over the past century. Draftees were said to be necessary to fight in World War I, World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. This change in attitude has definitely satisfied those who believe that we have an obligation to police the world. The idiocy of Vietnam served as a catalyst for an anti-draft attitude, which is still alive today. Fortunately, we have not had a draft for over 25 years, but Congress refuses to address this matter in a principled fashion by abolishing, once and for all, the useless Selective Service System. Too many authoritarians in Congress still believe that in times of need an army of teenage draftees will be needed to defend our commercial interests throughout the world..

A return to the spirit of the Republic would mean that a draft would never be used and all able-bodied persons would be willing to volunteer in defense of their liberty. Without the willingness to do so, liberty cannot be saved. A conscripted army can never substitute for the willingness of freedom-loving Americans to defend their country out of their love for liberty.

The US monetary system during the 20th Century has dramatically changed from the one authorized by the Constitution. Only silver and gold were to be used in payment of debt and no paper money was to be issued. In one of the few restrictions on the states, the Constitution prohibited them from issuing their own money and they were to use only gold and silver in payment of debt. No central bank was authorized. The authors of the Constitution were well aware of the dangers of inflation, having seen the great harm associated with the destruction of the Continental currency. They never wanted to see another system that ended with the slogan "It's not worth a Continental." They much preferred "sound as a dollar" or "as good as gold" as a description of our currency. Unfortunately their concerns, as they were reflected in the Constitution, have been ignored and, as this century closes, we do not have a sound dollar "as good as gold." The changes to our monetary system are by far the most significant economic events

of the 20th Century.

The gold dollar of 1900 is now nothing more than a Federal Reserve note with a promise by untrustworthy politicians and the central bankers to pay nothing for it. No longer is there silver or gold available to protect the value of a steadily depreciating currency. This is a fraud of the worst kind and the type of crime that would put a private citizen behind bars.

But there have been too many special interests benefiting by our fiat currency, too much ignorance and too much apathy regarding the nature of money. We will surely pay the price for this negligence. The relative soundness of our currency that we enjoy as we move into the 21st Century will not persist. The instability in world currency markets, because of the dollars' acceptance for so many years as a reserve currency, will cause devastating adjustments that Congress will eventually be forced to deal with.

The transition from sound money to paper money did not occur instantaneously. It occurred over a 58-year period between 1913 and 1971 and the mischief continues today. Our central bank, the Federal Reserve System (established in 1913 after two failed efforts in the 19th Century) has been the driving force behind the development of our current fiat system. Since the turn of the century, we have seen our dollar lose 95% of its purchasing power, and it continues to depreciate. This is nothing less than theft, and those responsible should be held accountable. The record of the Federal Reserve is abysmal. Yet at the close of the 20th Century, its chairman is held in extremely high esteem, with almost zero calls for study of the monetary system with intent to once again have the dollar linked to gold.

Ironically, the government and politicians are held in very low esteem, yet the significant trust in them to maintain the value of the currency is not questioned. But it should be.

The reasons for rejecting gold and promoting paper are not mysterious, since quite a few special interests benefit. Deficit financing is much more difficult when there's no central bank available to monetize government debt. This gives license to politicians to spend lavishly on the projects that are most likely to get them reelected. War is more difficult to pursue if government has to borrow or tax the people for its financing. The Federal Reserve's ability to create credit out of thin air to pay the bills run up by Congress, establishes a symbiosis that is easy for the politicians to love. It's also advantageous for the politicians to ignore the negative effects from such a monetary arrangement, since they tend to be hidden and disseminated.

A paper-money system attracts support from various economic groups. Bankers benefit from the "float" they get with a fractional reserve banking system that accompanies a fiat monetary system. Giant corporations, who get to borrow large funds at below-market interest rates, enjoy the system and consistently call for more inflation and artificially low interest rates. Even the general public seems to benefit from the artificial booms brought about by credit creation, with lower interest rates allowing major purchases like homes and cars.

The naïve and uninformed fully endorse the current system, because the benefits are readily apparent while the disadvantages are hidden, delayed, or not understood. The politicians, central bankers, commercial banks, big-business borrowers all believe their needs justify such a system. But the costs are many and the dangers are real. Because of easy credit throughout this century, we have found that financing war was easier than if taxes had to be raised. The many wars we have fought and the continuous military confrontations in smaller wars since Vietnam have made the 20th Century a bloody century. It is most likely that we would have pursued a less militaristic foreign policy if financing it had been more difficult. Likewise, financing the welfare state would have progressed much slower if our deficits could not have been financed by an accommodative central bank willing to inflate the money supply at will.

There are other real costs as well, that few are willing to believe are a direct consequence of Federal Reserve Board policy. Rampant inflation after World War I, as well as the 1921 Depression, were a consequence of monetary policy during and following the war. The stock market speculation of the 1920s, the stock market collapse of 1929, and the Depression of the 1930s (causing millions to be unemployed) all resulted from Federal Reserve Board monetary mischief.

Price inflation of the early 1950s was a consequence of monetary inflation required to fight the Korean War. Wage and price controls used then totally failed, yet the same canard was used during the Vietnam War in the early 1970s to again impose wage and price controls with even worse results. All the price inflation, all the distortions, all the recessions and unemployment should be laid at the doorstep of the Federal Reserve. The Fed is an accomplice in promoting all unnecessary war as well as the useless and harmful welfare programs with its willingness to cover Congress' profligate spending habits.

Even though the Fed did great harm before 1971, after the total elimination of the gold dollar linkage, the problems of deficit spending, welfare expansion, and military industrial complex influence have gotten much worse.

Although many claim the 1990s have been great economic years, Federal Reserve board action of the past decade has caused problems yet to manifest themselves. The inevitable correction will come as the new century begins and is likely to be quite serious.

The stage has been set. Rampant monetary growth has led to historic high asset inflation, massive speculation, over-capacity, malinvestment, excessive debt, negative savings rate, and a current account deficit of huge proportions. These conditions dictate a painful adjustment, something that would have never occurred under a gold standard. The special benefits of foreigners taking our inflated dollars for low-priced goods and then loaning them back to us will eventually end. The dollar must fall, interest rates must rise, price inflation will accelerate, the financial asset bubble will burst, and a dangerous downturn in the economy will follow. There are many reasons to believe the economic slowdown will be worldwide since the dollar is the reserve currency of the world. An illusion about our dollar's value has allowed us to prop up Europe and Japan in this past decade during a period of weak growth for them, but when reality sets in, economic conditions will deteriorate. Greater computer speed, which has helped to stimulate the boom of the 1990s, will work in the opposite direction as all the speculative positions unwind, and that includes the tens of trillion of dollars in derivatives. There was a good reason the Federal Reserve rushed in to rescue Long-Term Capital Management with a multi-billion dollar bailout. It was unadulterated fear that the big correction was about to begin. Up until now, feeding the credit bubble with even more credit has worked and is the only tool they have to fight the business cycle, but eventually control will be lost.

A paper money system is dangerous economically and not constitutionally authorized. It's also immoral for government to "counterfeit" money, which dilutes the value of the currency and steals value from those who hold the currency and those who did not necessarily benefit from its early circulation. Not everyone benefits from the largesse of government spending programs or a systematic debasement of the currency. The middle class, those not on welfare and not in the military industrial complex, suffer the most from rising prices and job losses in the correction phase of the business cycle. Congress must someday restore sound money to America. It's mandated in the Constitution; it's economically sound to do so; and it's morally right to guarantee a standard of value for the money. Our oath of office obligates all Members of Congress to pay attention to this and participate in this needed reform.

A police state is incompatible with liberty. A hundred years ago the federal government was responsible for enforcing very few laws. This has dramatically changed. There are now over 3,000 federal laws and 10,000 regulations employing hundreds of thousands of bureaucrats diligently enforcing them, with over 80,000 of them carrying guns. We now have an armed national police state, just as Jefferson complained of King George in the Declaration of Independence: "He has sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people and eat out their substance." A lot of political and police power has shifted from the state and local communities to the federal government over the past hundred years. If a constitutional republic is desired and individual liberty is cherished, this concentration of power cannot be tolerated.

Congress has been derelict in creating the agencies in the first place and ceding to the executive the power to write regulations and even tax without congressional approval. These agencies enforce their own laws and supervise their own administrative court system where citizens are considered guilty until proven innocent. The Constitution has been thrown out the window for all practical purposes, and

although more Americans everyday complain loudly, Congress does nothing to stop it.

The promoters of bureaucratic legislation claim to have good intentions but they fail to acknowledge the costs, the inefficiency or the undermining of individual rights. Worker safety, environmental concerns, drug usage, gun control, welfarism, banking regulations, government insurance, health programs, insurance against economic and natural disasters, and regulation of fish and wildlife are just a few of the issues that prompt the unlimited use of federal regulatory and legislative power to deal with perceived problems. But inevitably, for every attempt to solve one problem, government creates two new ones. National politicians aren't likely to volunteer a market or local-government solution to a problem, or they will find out how unnecessary they really are.

Congress' careless attitude about the federal bureaucracy and its penchant for incessant legislation have prompted serious abuse of every American citizen. Last year alone there were more than 42,000 civil forfeitures of property occurring without due process of law or a conviction of a crime, and oftentimes the owners weren't even charged with a crime. Return of illegally seized property is difficult, and the owner is forced to prove his innocence in order to retrieve it. Even though many innocent Americans have suffered, these laws have done nothing to stop drug usage or change people's attitudes toward the IRS. Seizures and forfeitures only make the problems they are trying to solve that much worse. The idea that a police department, under federal law, can seize property and receive direct benefit from it is an outrage. The proceeds can be distributed to the various police agencies without going through the budgetary process. This dangerous incentive must end.

The national police state mentality has essentially taken over crime investigation throughout the country. Our local sheriffs are intimidated and frequently overruled by the national police. Anything worse than writing traffic tickets prompts swarms of federal agents to the scene. We frequently see the FBI, DEA, CIA, BATF, Fish and Wildlife, IRS, federal marshals, and even the Army involved in local law enforcement. They don't come to assist, but to take over. The two most notorious examples of federal abuse of police powers were seen at Ruby Ridge and Waco, where non-aggressive citizens were needlessly provoked and killed by federal agents. At Waco even army tanks were used to deal with a situation the local sheriff could have easily handled. These two incidents are well known, but thousands of other similar abuses routinely occur with little publicity. The federal police-state, seen in action at Ruby Ridge and Waco, hopefully is not a sign of things to come; but it could be if we're not careful.

If the steady growth of the federal police power continues, the American Republic cannot survive. The Congresses of the 20th Century have steadily undermined the principle that the government closest to home must deal with law and order and not the federal government. The federal courts also have significantly contributed to this trend. Hopefully, in the new century, our support for a national police state will be diminished.

We have, in this past century, not only seen the undermining of the federalism that the Constitution desperately tried to preserve, but the principle of separations of power among the three branches of government has been severely compromised as well.

The Supreme Court no longer just rules on constitutionality but frequently rewrites the law with attempts at comprehensive social engineering. The most blatant example was the Roe vs. Wade ruling. The federal courts should be hearing a lot fewer cases, deferring as often as possible to the state courts. Throughout the 20th Century with Congress' obsession for writing laws for everything, the federal courts were quite willing to support the idea of a huge interventionist federal government. The fact that the police officers in the Rodney King case were tried twice for the same crime, ignoring the constitutional prohibition against double jeopardy, was astoundingly condoned by the courts rather than condemned. It is not an encouraging sign that the concept of equal protection under the law will prevail.

When it comes to Executive Orders, it's gotten completely out of hand. Executive Orders may legitimately be used by a president to carry out his constitutionally authorized duties but that would require far fewer orders than modern-day presidents have issued. As the 20th Century comes to a close, we find the executive branch willfully and arrogantly using the Executive Order to deliberately circumvent the legislative body and bragging about it.

Although nearly 100,000 American battle deaths have occurred since World War II, and both big and small wars have been fought almost continuously, there has not been a congressional declaration of war since 1941. Our presidents now fight wars, not only without explicit congressional approval, but also in the name of the United Nations with our troops now serving under foreign commanders. Our presidents have assured us that UN authorization is all that's needed to send our troops into battle. The 1973 War Powers Resolution, meant to restrict presidential war powers, has either been ignored by our presidents or used to justify war for up to 90 days. The Congress and the people, too often, have chosen to ignore this problem saying little about the recent bombing in Serbia. The continual bombing of Iraq, which has now been going on for over 9 years, is virtually ignored. If a president can decide on the issue of war, without a vote of the Congress, a representative republic does not exist. Our presidents should not have the authority to declare national emergencies, and they certainly should not have authority to declare marshal law, a power the Congress has already granted for any future emergency. Economic and political crises can develop quickly, and overly aggressive presidents are only too willing to enhance their own power in dealing with them.

Congress, sadly, throughout this century has been only too willing to grant authority to our presidents at the sacrifice of its own. The idea of separate but equal branches of government has been forgotten and the Congress bears much of the responsibility for this trend.

Executive Powers in the past hundred years, have grown steadily with the creation of agencies that write and enforce their own regulations and with Congress allowing the President to use Executive Orders without restraint. But in addition, there have been various other special vehicles that our presidents use without congressional oversight. For example the Exchange Stabilization Fund, set up during the Depression, has over \$34 billion available to be used at the President's discretion without congressional approval. This slush fund grows each year as it is paid interest on the securities it holds. It was instrumental in the \$50 billion Mexican bailout in 1995.

The CIA is so secretive that even those Congressmen privy to its operation have little knowledge of what this secret government actually does around the world. We know, of course, it has been involved in the past 50 years in assassinations and government overthrows on frequent occasions.

The Federal Reserve operation, which works hand-in-hand with the administration, is not subject to congressional oversight. The Fed manipulates currency exchange rates, controls short-term interest rates, and fixes the gold price; all behind closed doors. Bailing out foreign governments, financial corporations, and huge banks can all be achieved without congressional approval. A hundred years ago when we had a gold standard, credit could not be created out of thin air, and because a much more limited government philosophy prevailed, this could not have been possible. Today it's hard to even document what goes on, let alone expect Congress to control it.

The people should be able to closely monitor the government, but as our government grows in size and scope, it seeks to monitor our every move. Attacks on our privacy are incessant and are always justified by citing so-called legitimate needs of the state, efficiency, and law enforcement. Plans are laid for numerous data banks to record everyone's activities. A national ID card using our social security number is the goal of many, and even though we achieved a significant victory in delaying its final approval last year, the promoters will surely persist in their efforts. Plans are made for a medical data bank to be kept and used against our wishes. Job banks and details of all our lending activities continue to be of interest to all national policing agencies to make sure they know exactly where the drug dealers, illegal aliens, and tax dodgers are and what they're doing, it is argued. For national security purposes, the Echelon system of monitoring all overseas phone calls has been introduced, yet the details of this program are not available to any inquiring Member of Congress.

The government knew very little about each individual American citizen in 1900, but starting with World War I, there has been a systematic growth of government surveillance of everyone's activities, with multiple records being kept. Today, true privacy is essentially a thing of the past. The FBI and the IRS have been used by various administrations to snoop and harass political opponents and there has been little effort by Congress to end this abuse. A free society, that is a constitutional republic, cannot

be maintained if privacy is not highly cherished and protected by the government, rather than abused by it.

And we can expect it to get worse. Secretary of Defense Bill Cohen was recently quoted as saying: "Terrorism is escalating to the point that US citizens may soon have to choose between civil liberties and more intrusive forms of protection;" all in the name of taking care of us! As far as I am concerned, we could all do with a lot less government protection and security. The offer of government benevolence is the worst reason to sacrifice liberty, but we have seen a lot of that during the 20th Century.

Probably the most significant change in attitude that occurred in the 20th Century was that with respect to life itself. Although abortion has been performed for hundreds if not thousands of years, it was rarely considered an acceptable and routine medical procedure without moral consequence. Since 1973 abortion in America has become routine and justified by a contorted understanding of the right to privacy. The difference between American's rejection of abortions at the beginning of the century, compared to today's casual acceptance, is like night and day. Although a vocal number of Americans express their disgust with abortion on demand, our legislative bodies and the courts claim that the procedure is a constitutionally protected right, disregarding all scientific evidence and legal precedents that recognize the unborn as a legal living entity deserving protection of the law. Ironically the greatest proponents of abortion are the same ones who advocate imprisonment for anyone who disturbs the natural habitat of a toad.

This loss of respect for human life in the latter half of the 20th Century has yet to have its full impact on our society. Without a deep concern for life, and with the casual disposing of living human fetuses, respect for liberty is greatly diminished. This has allowed a subtle but real justification for those who commit violent acts against fellow human beings.

It should surprise no one that a teenager delivering a term newborn is capable of throwing the child away in a garbage dumpster. The new mother in this circumstance is acting consistently knowing that if an abortion is done just before a delivery it's legally justified and the abortionist is paid to kill the child. Sale of fetal parts to tax-supported institutions is now an accepted practice. This moral dilemma that our society has encountered over the past 40 years, if not resolved in favor of life, will make it impossible for a system of laws to protect the life and liberty of any citizen. We can expect senseless violence to continue as a sense of self-worth is undermined.

Children know that mothers and sisters when distraught have abortions to solve the problem of an unwanted pregnancy. Distraught teenagers in copying this behavior are now more prone to use violence against others or themselves when provoked or confused. This tendency is made worse because they see, in this age of abortion, their own lives as having less value, thus destroying their self-esteem.

The prime reason government is organized in a free society is to protect life-not to protect those who take life. Today, not only do we protect the abortionist, we take taxpayers funds to pay for abortions domestically as well as overseas. This egregious policy will continue to plague us well into the 21st Century.

A free society designed to protect life and liberty is incompatible with government sanctioning and financing abortion on demand. It should not be a surprise to anyone that as abortion became more acceptable, our society became more violent and less free. The irony is that Roe vs. Wade justified abortion using a privacy argument, conveniently forgetting that not protecting the innocent unborn is the most serious violation of privacy possible. If the location of the fetus is the justification for legalized killing, the privacy of our homes would permit the killing of the newborn, the deformed, and the elderly-a direction in which we find ourselves going. As government-financed medical care increases, we will hear more economic arguments for euthanasia-that's "mercy" killing for the benefit of the budget planners. Already we hear these economic arguments for killing the elderly and terminally ill.

Last year the House made a serious error by trying to federalize the crime of killing a fetus occurring in an act of violence. The stated goal was to emphasize that the fetus deserved legal protection under the law. And indeed it should and does-at the state level. Federalizing any act of violence is unconstitutional; essentially all violent acts should be dealt with by the states. And because we have allowed the courts and Congress to federalize such laws, we find more good state laws are overridden

than good federal laws written. Roe vs. Wade federalized state abortion laws and ushered in the age of abortion. The Unborn Victims of Violence Act, if passed into law, will do great harm by explicitly excluding abortionists, thus codifying for the first time the Roe vs. Wade concept and giving even greater legal protection to the abortionist.

The responsibility of the Congress is twofold. First, we should never fund abortions. Nothing could be more heinous than forcing those with strong right-to-life beliefs to pay for abortions. Second, Roe vs. Wade must be replaced by limiting jurisdiction, which can be done through legislation-a constitutional option. If we as a nation do not once again show respect and protect the life of the unborn, we can expect the factions that have emerged on each side of this issue to become more vocal and violent. A nation that can casually toss away its smallest and most vulnerable members and call it a "right" cannot continue to protect the lives or rights of its other citizens.

Much has changed over the past hundred years. Where technology has improved our living standards, we find that our government has significantly changed from one of limited scope to that of pervasive intervention.

A hundred years ago, it was generally conceded that one extremely important government function was to enforce contracts made voluntarily in the marketplace. Today government notoriously interferes with almost every voluntary economic transaction. Consumerism, labor-law, wage standards, hiring and firing regulations, political correctness, affirmative action, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the tax code, and others all place a burden on the two parties struggling to transact business. The EPA, OSHA, and government-generated litigation also interfere with voluntary contracts. At times it seems a miracle that our society adapts and continues to perform reasonably well in spite of the many bureaucratic dictates.

As the 20th Century comes to a close, we see a dramatic change from a government that once served an important function by emphasizing the value of voluntary contracts to one that excessively interferes with them.

Although the interference is greater in economic associations than in social, the principle is the same. Already we see the political correctness movement interfering with social and religious associations. Data banks are set up to keep records on everyone, especially groups with strong religious views and anybody who would be so bold as to call himself a "patriot". The notion that there is a difference between murder and murder driven by hate has established the principle of thought crime, a dangerous trend indeed.

When the business cycle turns down, all the regulations and laws that interfere with economic and personal transactions will not be as well tolerated, and then the true cost will become apparent. It is under the conditions of a weak economy that such government interference generates a reaction to the anger over the rules that has been suppressed.

To the statist, the idea that average people can and should take care of themselves by making their own decisions, and that they don't need Big Brother to protect them in everything they do, is anathema to the way they think. The bureaucratic mindset is convinced that without the politicians' efforts, no one would be protected from anything, rejecting the idea of a free-market economy out of ignorance or arrogance.

This change in the 20th Century has significantly contributed to the dependency of our poor on government handouts, the recipients being convinced they are entitled to help and that they are incapable of taking care of themselves. A serious loss of self-esteem and unhappiness result, even if the system on the short run seems to help them get by.

There were no federal laws at the end of the 19th Century dealing with drugs or guns. Gun violence was rare, and abuse of addictive substances was only a minor problem. Now after a hundred years of progressive government intervention in dealing with guns and drugs, with thousands of laws and regulations, we have more gun violence and a huge drug problem. Before the social authoritarians decided to reform the gun and drug culture, they amended the Constitution enacting alcohol prohibition. Prohibition failed to reduce alcohol usage, and a crime wave resulted. After 14 years, the American

people demanded repeal of this social engineering amendment and got it. Prohibition prompted the production of poor-quality alcohol with serious health consequences, while respect for the law was lost as it was flagrantly violated. At least at that time the American people believed the Constitution had to be amended to prohibit the use of alcohol, something that is ignored today in the federal government's effort to stop drug usage. In spite of the obvious failure of alcohol prohibition, the federal government after its repeal, turned its sights on gun ownership and drug usage.

The many federal anti-gun laws written since 1934, along with the constant threat of outright registration and confiscation, have put the FBI and the BATF at odds with millions of law-abiding citizens who believe the Constitution is explicit in granting the right of gun ownership to all non-violent Americans. Our government pursued alcohol prohibition in the 1920s and confiscation of gold in the 1930s, so it's logical to conclude that our government is quite capable of confiscating all privately owned firearms. That has not yet occurred, but as we move into the next century, many in Washington advocate just that and would do it if they didn't think the American people would revolt, just as they did against alcohol prohibition.

Throughout this century, there has been a move toward drug prohibition starting with the Harrison Act in 1912. The first federal marijuana law was pushed through by FDR in 1938, but the real war on drugs has been fought with intensity for the past 30 years.

Hundreds of billions of dollars have been spent, and not only is there no evidence of reduced drug usage, we have instead seen a tremendous increase. Many deaths have occurred from overdoses of street drugs, since there is no quality control or labeling. Crime, as a consequence of drug prohibition, has skyrocketed, and our prisons are overflowing. Many prisoners are non-violent and should be treated as patients with addictions, not as criminals. Irrational mandatory minimal sentences have caused a great deal of harm. We have non-violent drug offenders doing life sentences, and there is no room to incarcerate the rapists and murderers.

With drugs and needles illegal, the unintended consequence of the spread of AIDs and hepatitis through dirty needles has put a greater burden on the taxpayers who are forced to care for the victims. This ridiculous system that offers a jail cell for a sick addict rather than treatment has pushed many a young girl into prostitution to pay for drugs priced hundreds of times higher than they are worth. But the drug dealers love the system and dread a new approach. When we finally decide that drug prohibition has been no more successful than alcohol prohibition, the drug dealers will disappear.

But the monster drug problem we have created is compounded by moves to tax citizens so government can hand out free needles to drug addicts who are breaking the law, in hopes there will be less spread of hepatitis and AIDs in order to reduce government health-care costs. This proposal shows how bankrupt we are at coming to grips with this problem.

And it seems we will never learn. Tobacco is about to be categorized as a drug and a prohibition of sorts imposed. This will make the drug war seem small if we continue to expand the tobacco war. Talk about insane government policies of the 20th Century, tobacco policy wins the prize. First we subsidize tobacco in response to demands by the special interests, knowing full well even from the beginning that tobacco had many negative health consequences. Then we spend taxpayers' money, warning the people of its dangers without stopping the subsidies. Government then pays for the care of those who choose to smoke despite the known dangers and warnings. But it did not stop there. The trial lawyers' lobby saw to it that local government entities could sue tobacco companies for reimbursements of the excess costs they were bearing in taking care of smoking-related illnesses. And the only way this could be paid for was to place a tax on those people who smoke.

How could such silliness go on for so long? For one reason. We as a nation have forgotten a basic precept of a free society-that all citizens must be responsible for their own acts. If one smokes and gets sick, that's the problem of the one making the decision to smoke, or take any other risks for that matter, not the innocent taxpayers who have already been forced to pay for the tobacco subsidies and government health warning ads. Beneficiaries of this monstrous policy have been: tobacco farmers, tobacco manufacturers, politicians, bureaucrats, smokers, health organizations and physicians, and

especially the trial lawyers. Who suffers? The innocent taxpayers that have no voice in the matter and who acted responsibly and chose not to smoke. Think of what it would mean if we followed this same logic and implemented a federal social program, similar to the current war on smoking, designed to reduce the spread of AIDS within the gay community. Astoundingly, we have done the opposite by making AIDS a politically correct disease. There was certainly a different attitude a hundred years ago regarding those with sexually transmitted diseases like syphilis, compared to the special status given AIDS victims today.

And it is said an interventionist economy is needed to make society fair to everyone! We need no more government "fairness" campaigns. Egalitarianism never works and inevitably penalizes the innocent. Government in a free society is supposed to protect the innocent, encourage self-reliance, and impose equal justice while allowing everyone to benefit from their own effort and suffer the consequence of their acts.

A free and independent people need no authoritarian central government dictating eating, drinking, gambling, sexual or smoking habits. When rules are required, they should come from the government closest to home, as it once did prior to America's ill-fated 20th Century experiment with alcohol prohibition. Let's hope we show more common sense in the 21st Century in these matters than we did in the 20th.

A compulsive attitude by politicians to regulate non-violent behavior may be well intentioned but leads to many unintended consequences. Legislation passed in the second half of the 20th Century dealing with drugs and personal habits has been the driving force behind the unconstitutional seizure and forfeiture laws and the loss of financial privacy. The war on drugs is the most important driving force behind the national police state. The excuse given for calling in the Army helicopters and tanks at the Waco disaster was that the authorities had evidence of an amphetamine lab on the Davidian's property. This was never proven, but nevertheless it gave the legal cover-but not the proper constitutional authority-for escalating the attack on the Davidians, which led to the senseless killing of so many innocent people. The attitude surrounding this entire issue needs to change. We should never turn over the job of dealing with bad habits to our federal government. That is a recipe for disaster.

4. Social and Philosophic changes.

America has not only changed technologically in the past hundred years, but our social attitudes and personal philosophies have changed as well. We have less respect for life and less love for liberty. We are obsessed with material things, along with rowdy and raucous entertainment. Needs and wants have become rights for both rich and poor. The idea of instant gratification too often guides our actions, and when satisfaction is not forthcoming anger and violence break out. Road rage and airline passenger rage are seen more frequently. Regardless of fault, a bad outcome in almost anything, even if beyond human control will prompt a lawsuit. Too many believe they deserve to win the lottery, and a lawsuit helps the odds. Unfortunately the only winners too often are the lawyers hyping the litigation.

Few Americans are convinced anymore that productive effort is the most important factor in economic success and personal satisfaction. One did not get rich in the 1990s investing in companies that had significant or modest earnings. The most successful investors bought companies that had no earnings and the gambling paid off big. This attitude cannot create perpetual wealth and must someday end.

Today financial gurus are obsessed with speculation in the next initial public offering (IPO) and express no interest in the cause of liberty, without which markets cannot exist.

Lying and cheating are now acceptable by the majority. This was not true a hundred years ago when moral standards were higher. The October 1999 issue of US News and World Report reveals that 84% of college students believe cheating is necessary to get ahead in today's world, and 90% are convinced there's no price to pay for cheating. Not surprisingly, 90% of college students believe politicians often cheat. An equal percentage believe the media cheats as well. There's no way to know if the problem is this bad in the general population, but these statistics indicate our young people do not trust our politicians or media. Trust has been replaced with a satisfaction in the materialism that a speculative stock market, borrowing money, and a spendthrift government can generate. But what

happens to our society if the material abundance, which we enjoy, is ephemeral and human trust is lost?

Social disorder will surely result and there will be a clamor for a more authoritarian government. This scenario may indeed threaten the stability of our social order and significantly undermine all our constitutional protections. But there is no law or ethics committee that will solve this problem of diminishing trust and honesty-that is a problem of the heart, mind, and character to be dealt with by each individual citizen. The importance of the family unit today has been greatly diminished compared to the close of the 19th Century. Now, fewer people get married, more divorces occur, and the number of children born out of wedlock continues to rise. Tax penalties are placed on married couples; illegitimacy and single parenthood are rewarded by government subsidies, and we find many authoritarians arguing that the definition of marriage should change in order to allow non-husband and wife couples to qualify for welfare handouts. The welfare system has mocked the concept of marriage in the name of political correctness, economic egalitarianism, and hetero-phobia.

Freedom of speech is still cherished in America, but the political correctness movement has seriously undermined dissent on our university campuses. A conservative or libertarian black intellectual is clearly not treated with the same respect afforded an authoritarian black spokesman. We now hear of individuals being sent to psychiatrists when personal and social views are rude or out of the ordinary. It was commonplace in the Soviet system to incarcerate political dissenters in "mental" institutions. Those who received a Soviet government designation of "socially undesirable elements" were stripped of their rights. Will this be the way we treat political dissent in the future? We hear of people losing their jobs because of "socially undesirable" thoughts or for telling off-color jokes. Today sensitivity courses are routinely required in America to mold social thinking for the simplest of infractions. The thought-police are all around us. It's a bad sign.

Any academic discussion questioning the wisdom of our policies surrounding World War II is met with shrill accusations of anti-Semitism and Nazi lover. No one is even permitted without derision by the media, the university intellectuals, and the politicians to ask why the United States allied itself with the murdering Soviets and then turned over Eastern Europe to them while ushering in a 45-year saber-rattling dangerous cold war period. "Free speech" is permitted in our universities for those who do not threaten the status quo of welfarism, globalism, corporatism, and a financial system that provides great benefits to powerful special interests. If a university professor does not follow the party line, he does not receive tenure.

We find ourselves at the close of this century realizing all our standards have been undermined. A monetary standard for our money is gone; the dollar is whatever the government tells us it is. There is no definition, and no promise to pay anything for the notes issued ad infinitum by the government.

Standards for education are continually lowered, de-emphasizing excellence. Relative ethics are promoted, and moral absolutes are ridiculed. The influence of religion on our standards is frowned upon and replaced by secular humanistic standards.

The work ethic has been replaced by a welfare ethic, based on need not effort. Strict standards required for an elite military force are gone, and our lack of readiness reflects this.

Standards of behavior of our professional athletes seem to reflect the rules followed in the ring by the professional wrestlers where anything goes.

Managed medical care, driven by government decrees, has reduced its quality and virtually ruined the doctor-patient relationship.

Movie and TV standards are so low that our young people's senses are totally numbed by them.

Standards of courtesy on highways, airplanes, and shops are seriously compromised and at times lead to senseless violence.

With the acceptance of abortion, our standards for life have become totally arbitrary as they have become for liberty. Endorsing the arbitrary use of force by our government morally justifies the direct use of force by disgruntled groups not satisfied with the slower government process.

The standards for honesty and truth have certainly deteriorated during the past hundred years.

Property ownership has been undermined through environmental regulations and excessive

taxation. True ownership of property no longer exists.

There has been a systematic undermining of legal and constitutional principles once respected and followed for the protection of individual liberty.

A society cannot continue in a state of moral anarchy. Moral anarchy will lead to political anarchy. A society without clearly understood standards of conduct cannot remain stable any more than an architect can design and build a sturdy skyscraper with measuring instruments that change in value each day. We recently lost a NASA space probe because someone failed to convert inches to centimeters—a simple but deadly mistake in measuring physical standards. If we as a people debase our moral standards, the American Republic will meet a similar fate.

5. Law and Morality

Many Americans agree that this country is facing a moral crisis that has been especially manifested in the closing decade of the 20th Century. Our President's personal conduct, the characters of our politicians in general, the caliber of the arts, movies and television, and our legal system have reflected this crisis. The personal conduct of many of our professional athletes and movie stars has been less than praiseworthy.

Some politicians, sensing this, have pushed hard to write and strictly enforce numerous laws regarding personal non-violent behavior with the hope that the people will become more moral. This has not happened, but it has filled our prisons. This year it will cost more than \$40 billion to run our prison system. The prison population, nearing 2 million, is up 70% in the last decade and two-thirds of all the inmates did not commit an act of violence. Mandatory minimum drug-sentencing laws have been instrumental in this trend.

Laws clearly cannot alter moral behavior, and if it is attempted, it creates bigger problems. Only individuals with moral convictions can make "society" moral. But the law does reflect the general consensus of the people regarding force and aggression, which is a moral issue. Government can be directed to restrain and punish violent aggressive citizens or it can use aggressive force to rule the people, redistribute wealth, make citizens follow certain moral standards, and force them to practice certain personal habits. Once government is permitted to do the latter, even in a limited sense, the guiding principle of an authoritarian government is established and its power and influence over the people will steadily grow at the expense of personal liberty.

No matter how well intentioned, an authoritarian government always abuses its powers. In its effort to achieve an egalitarian society, the principle of inequality that freedom recognizes and protects is lost. Government then, instead of being an obstacle to violence becomes the biggest perpetrator. This invites all the special interests to manipulate the monopoly and evil use of government power. Twenty thousand lobbyists currently swarm Washington seeking special advantage. That's where we find ourselves today.

Although government cannot and should not try to make people better in the personal moral sense, proper law should have a moral non-aggressive basis to it—no lying, cheating, stealing, killing, injuring, or threatening. Government then would be limited to protecting contracts, people, and property, while guaranteeing all personal non-violent behaviors—even the controversial.

Although there are degrees in various authoritarian societies as to how much power a government may wield, once government is given authority to wield power, it does so in an ever-increasing fashion. The pressure to use government authority to run the economy and our lives depends on several factors. These include a basic understanding of personal liberty, respect for a constitutional republic, economic myths, ignorance, and misplaced good intentions. In every society there are always those waiting in the wings for an opportunity to show how brilliant they are, as they lust for power, convinced they know what's best for everyone. But the defenders of liberty know that what is best for everyone is to be left alone, with a government limited to stopping aggressive behavior.

6. Philosophic Explanation

The 20th Century has produced socialist dictators the world over, from Stalin, Hitler and Mao to Pol Pot, Castro, and Ho Chi Minh. More than 200 million people died as a result of the bad ideas of these

evil men. Each and every one of these dictators despised the principle of private-property ownership-which then undermined all the other liberties cherished by the people.

It is argued that the United States and now the world have learned of a Third Way-something between extreme socialism and mean-spirited capitalism. But this is a dream. The so-called friendly Third Way endorses 100% the principle that government authority can be used to direct our lives and the economy. Once this is accepted, the principle that man alone is responsible for his salvation and his life on earth, which serves as the foundation for free-market capitalism, is rejected. The Third Way of friendly welfarism, or soft fascism, that is, where government and businesses are seen as partners, undermines freedom and sets the stage for authoritarian socialism. Personal liberty cannot be preserved if we remain on the course on which we find ourselves at the close of the 20th Century.

In our early history, it was understood that a free society embraced both personal civil liberties and economic liberties. During the 20th Century, this unified concept of freedom has been undermined. Today we have one group talking about economic freedom while interfering with our personal liberty and the other group condemning economic liberty, while preaching the need to protect personal civil liberties. Both groups reject liberty 50% of the time. That leaves very few who defend liberty all the time. Sadly, there are too few in this country who today understand and defend liberty in both areas. A common debate that we hear occurs over how we can write laws protecting normal speech and at the same time limiting commercial speech as if they were two entirely different things.

Many Americans wonder why Congress pays so little attention to the Constitution and are bewildered as to how so much inappropriate legislation gets passed. But the Constitution is not entirely ignored. It is used correctly at times when it's convenient and satisfies a particular goal, but never consistently across the board on all legislation. And too, the Constitution is all too frequently made to say exactly what the authors of special legislation want it to say. That's the modern way; language can be made relative to our times. But without a precise understanding and respect for the supreme law of the land, i.e., the Constitution, it no longer serves as the guide for the rule of law. In its place we have substituted the rule of man and the special interests.

That's how we have arrived at the close of this century without a clear understanding or belief in the cardinal principles of the Constitution-the separation of powers and the principle of federalism. Instead, we are rushing toward a powerful executive, centralized control, and a Congress greatly diminished in importance. Executive Orders, agency regulations, federal court rulings, and unratified international agreements direct our government, economy, and foreign policy. Congress has truly been reduced in status and importance over the past hundred years. And when the people's voices are heard, it's done indirectly through polling, allowing our leaders to decide how far they can go without stirring up the people. But this is opposite to what the Constitution was supposed to do. It was meant to protect the rights of the minority from the dictates of the majority. The majority vote of the powerful and the influential was never meant to rule the people.

We may not have a king telling us which trees we can cut down, but we do have a government bureaucracy and a pervasive threat of litigation by radical environmentalists who keep us from cutting our own trees, digging a drainage ditch, or filling a puddle-all at the expense of private-property ownership.

The key element in a free society is that individuals should wield control of their own lives, receiving the benefits and suffering the consequences of all their acts. Once the individual becomes a pawn of the state, whether a monarch or a majority runs the state, a free society can no longer endure. We are dangerously close to that happening in America, even in the midst of plenty and with the appearance of contentment. If individual freedom is carelessly snuffed out, the creative energy needed for productive pursuits will dissipate. Government produces nothing, and in its effort to redistribute wealth, can only destroy it.

Freedom too often is rejected-especially in the midst of plenty--when there is a belief that government largesse will last forever. This is true because it is tough to accept personal responsibility, practice the work ethic, and follow the rules of peaceful co-existence with our fellow man. Continuous

vigilance against the would-be tyrants who promise security at minimal cost must be maintained. The temptation is great to accept the notion that everyone can be a beneficiary of the caring state and a winner of the lottery or a class-action lawsuit. But history has proven there is never a shortage of authoritarians-benevolent, of course-quite willing to tell others how to live for their own good. A little sacrifice of personal liberty is a small price to pay for long-time security, it is too often reasoned.

7. Worth the Effort

I have good friends who are in basic agreement with my analysis of the current state of the American Republic, but argue it is a waste of time and effort to try and change the direction in which we are going. No one will listen, they argue, and besides the development of a strong centralized authoritarian government is too far along to reverse the trends of the 20th Century. Why waste time in Congress when so few people care about liberty, they ask. The masses, they point out, are interested only in being taken care of, and the elite want to keep receiving the special benefits allotted to them through special-interest legislation.

I understand the odds, and I am not naïve enough to believe the effort to preserve liberty is a cakewalk. And I am very much aware of my own limitations in achieving this goal. But ideas, based on sound and moral principles, do have consequences. And powerful ideas can have major consequences beyond our wildest dreams. Our Founders clearly understood this, and they knew they would be successful, even against the overwhelming odds they faced. They described this steady confidence they shared with each other when hopes were dim as "divine providence." Good ideas can have good results and we must remember bad ideas can have bad results.

It is crucial to understand that vague and confusing idealism produces mediocre results, especially when it is up against a determined effort to promote an authoritarian system that is sold to the people as conciliatory and non-confrontational--a compromise, they say, between the two extremes. But it must be remembered that no matter how it's portrayed, when big government systematically and steadily undermines individual rights and economic liberty, it's still a powerful but negative idea and it will not fade away easily. Ideas of liberty are a great threat to those who enjoy planning the economy and running other people's lives.

The good news is that our numbers are growing. More Americans than ever before are very much aware of what's going on in Washington and how, on a daily basis, their liberties are being undermined. There are more intellectual think tanks than ever before promoting the market economy, private property ownership, and personal liberty. The large majority of Americans are sick and tired of being overtaxed and despise the income tax and the inheritance tax. The majority of Americans know government programs fail to achieve their goals and waste huge sums of money. A smoldering resentment against the unfairness of government efforts to force equality on us can inspire violence, but instead it should be used to encourage an honest system of equal justice based on individual not collective rights. Sentiment is moving in the direction of challenging the status quo of the welfare and international warfare state. The Internet has given hope to millions who have felt their voices were not being heard. And this influence is just beginning. The three major networks and conventional government propaganda no longer control the information now available to anyone with a computer.

The only way the supporters of big government can stop the Internet will be to tax, regulate, and monitor it, and although it is a major undertaking, plans are already being laid to do precisely that. Big government proponents are anxious to make the tax on the Internet an international tax as advocated by the United Nations, apply the Eschelon principle used to monitor all overseas phone calls to the Internet and prevent the development of private encryption that would guarantee privacy on the Internet. These battles have just begun, and if the civil libertarians and free-market proponents don't win this fight to keep the Internet free and private, the tools for undermining authoritarian government will be greatly reduced. Victory for liberty will probably elude us for decades. The excuse they will give for controlling the Internet will be to stop pornography, catch drug dealers, monitor child molesters, and to do many other "good" things. We should not be deceived.

We face tough odds, but to avoid battle or believe there is a place to escape to someplace else in

the world would concede victory to those who endorse authoritarian government. The grand experiment in human liberty must not be abandoned. A renewed hope and understanding of liberty is what we need as we move into the 21st Century.

A perfectly free society we know cannot be achieved, and the idea of perfect socialism is an oxymoron. Pursuing that goal throughout the 20th Century has already caused untold human suffering. The clear goal of a free society must be understood and sought or the vision of the authoritarians will face little resistance and will easily fill the void.

There are precise goals Congress should work for, even under today's difficult circumstances. It must preserve, in the best manner possible, voluntary options to failed government programs. We must legalize freedom to the maximum extent possible.

1. Complete police protection is impossible; therefore we must preserve the right to own weapons in self-defense.

2. In order to maintain economic protection against government debasement of the currency, gold ownership must be preserved-something taken away from the American people during the Depression.

3. Adequate retirement protection by the government is limited, if not ultimately impossible. We must allow every citizen the opportunity to control all his or her retirement funds.

4. Government education has clearly failed. We must guarantee the right of families to home school or send their kids to private schools and help them with tax credits.

5. Government snooping must be stopped. We must work to protect all our privacy, especially on the Internet, prevent the National ID Card, and to stop the development of all government data banks.

6. Federal police functions are unconstitutional and increasingly abusive. We should disarm all federal bureaucrats and return the police function to local authorities.

7. The army was never meant to be used in local policing activities. We must firmly prohibit our presidents from using the military in local law enforcement operations which is now being planned for under the guise of fighting terrorism.

8. Foreign military intervention by our presidents in recent years, to police the American Empire, is a costly failure. Foreign military intervention should not be permitted without explicit congressional approval.

9. Competitions in all elections should be guaranteed, and the monopoly powers gained by the two major parties through unfair signature requirements, high fees, and campaign donation controls should be removed. Competitive parties should be allowed in all government sponsored debates.

10. We must do whatever is possible to help instill a spiritual love for freedom and recognize that our liberties depend on responsible individuals, not the group or the collective or society as a whole. The individual is the building block of a free and prosperous social order.

The Founders knew full well that the concept of liberty was fragile and could easily be undermined. They worried about the dangers that lay ahead. As we move into the new century, it is an appropriate time to rethink the principles upon which a free society rests.

Jefferson, concerned about the future, wrote: "Yes, we did produce a near-perfect republic. But will they keep it? Or will they, in the enjoyment of plenty, lose the memory of freedom? Material abundance without character is the path of destruction." "They" that he refers to are "we." And the future is now. Freedom, Jefferson knew, would produce "plenty," and with "material abundance" it's easy to forget the responsibility the citizens of a free society must assume if freedom and prosperity are to continue. The key element for the Republic's survival for Jefferson was the "character" of the people, something no set of laws can instill. The question today is not that of abundance, but of character, respect for others, their liberty and their property. It is the character of the people that determines the proper role for government in a free society.

Samuel Adams, likewise, warned future generations. He referred to "good manners" as the vital ingredient a free society needs to survive. Adams said: "Neither the wisest Constitution nor the wisest laws will secure the liberty and happiness of a people whose manners are universally corrupt."

The message is clear, if we lose our love of liberty and our manners become corrupt, character is

lost and so is the Republic.

But character is determined by free will and personal choice by each of us individually. Character can be restored or cast aside at a whim. The choice is ours alone and our leaders should show the way.

Some who are every bit as concerned as I am about our future and the pervasive corrupt influence in our government in every aspect of our lives offer other solutions. Some say to solve the problem all we have to do is write more detailed laws dealing with campaign finance reform, ignoring how this might undermine the principles of liberty. Similarly, others argue that what is needed is merely to place tighter restrictions on the lobbyists in order to minimize their influence, but they fail to recognize that this undermines our constitutional right to petition our government for redress of grievances.

And there are others with equally good intentions that insist on writing even more laws and regulations punishing non-violent behavior in order to teach good manners and instill character. But they fail to see that tolerating non-violent behavior-even when stupid and dangerous to one's own self-is the same as our freedom to express unpopular political and offensive ideas and to promote and practice religion in any way one chooses. Resorting to writing more laws with the intent of instilling "character" and good "manners" in the people is anathema to liberty. The love of liberty can come only from within and is dependent on a stable family and a society that seeks the brotherhood of man through voluntary and charitable means.

And there are others who believe that government force is legitimate in promoting what they call fair economic redistribution. The proponents of this course have failed to read history and instead adhere to economic myths. They ignore the evidence that this effort to help their fellow man will inevitably fail. Instead, it will do the opposite and lead to the impoverishment of many more. But more importantly, if left unchecked this approach will destroy liberty by undermining the concept of private property ownership and free markets, the bedrock of economic prosperity.

None of these alternatives will work. Character and good manners are not a government problem. They reflect individual attitudes that can only be changed by individuals themselves. Freedom allows virtue and excellence to blossom. When government takes on the role of promoting virtue, illegitimate government force is used, and tyrants quickly appear on the scene to do the job. Virtue and excellence become illusive, and we find instead that the government officials become corrupt and freedom is lost-the very ingredient required for promoting virtue, harmony and the brotherhood of man.

Let's hope and pray that our political focus will soon shift toward preserving liberty and individual responsibility and away from authoritarianism. The future of the American Republic depends on it. Let us not forget the American dream depends on keeping alive the spirit of liberty.

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