

All Maine Matters

Because All of Maine **DOES** Matter!
Vol. 1, No. 11 November 2006

FREE

Fundamentals Of The Taxpayer Bill Of Rights

by John Frary

The debate over the Taxpayer Bill of Rights involves questions of philosophy, policy and advantage. The philosophical question concerns rights and power. Policy is about its social and economic effects. Finally, we must answer the question raised over 2,000 years ago by an obscure Roman senator: Cui bono--"to whom the profit?" This question always applies to every issue.

The Bill of Rights in the US Constitution is the first ten amendments, added to restrict the powers granted to Congress by Article I, Section 8 of the original document. The Taxpayer Bill of Rights aims, in similar fashion, to restrict the power of the state legislature and local governing bodies. Opponents complain that the two-thirds super-majority required of the governing body and the consent of the voters needed for a tax increase will make the work of government more difficult.

Well sure. That's the idea exactly, and a good one too. The whole system divided powers, checks and balances, two houses of Congress, and states' rights written into the national Constitution have the same result. The fundamental principle behind all these restrictions is this: the government and the governed do not always have the same interests. Thomas Jefferson sums the problem up neatly: "[it's] the natural progress of things" for government to grow, and "liberty to yield." Nothing has happened in the last two hundred years in this or any other country to contradict this view.

Opponents argue that this legislation undermines the sacred tenets of representative government; that the problem of taxation should be left to our elected representatives and the only legitimate response to our discontents is to elect better legislators; that the Taxpayer Bill of Rights undermines democ-

racy by requiring extraordinary majorities; that it abolishes the power of the town meetings.

These arguments would disgrace a high school civics teacher. The voters do not grant their Masters perpetual and immutable powers. The legislature has made a hideous mess of Maine's taxes and capped the mess with LD1. There isn't a single legislator running in this state with a coherent plan for reining in taxation, other than those supporting the Taxpayer Bill of Rights.

A view of politics which omits Augusta's 300 lobbyists, special interest groups, political action committees and powerful non-profits organizations cannot be taken seriously. None of these groups--none--exist to protect the citizen from the "natural progress" of governmental growth.

I'm all in favor of town meetings for a number of reasons, but not because they represent an ideal democratic process. If you saw 700 people turn out for a meeting in a town of 7,000 registered voters you would be astounded. If you saw 70 people turn out you would not be surprised. If an actual majority of registered voters showed up you would be witnessing a miracle signaling nothing less than the End of Days.

Now let's leave the hogwash aside. The real philosophical issue is whether the taxpayers of this state should be allowed the power to counter all the organized groups who wish to have unimpeded access to their pocketbooks. The growth of governmental dependence in a state once famous for the independence of its people gives this issue an acute importance. How much power should be reserved to organized groups of tax-takers and how much to the tax-givers.

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Main Street, Bethel, Maine

Maine's Backcountry: Squeezing Out Traditional Users

Part two of a three-part series
by Rep. David Trahan

It was with great dismay that sportsmen and traditional outdoor enthusiasts learned recently that Roxanne Quimby, the founder of Burt's Bees, had purchased another 25,000 acres to add to her vast land holdings around Baxter State Park. The purchase price was reported as \$10 million.

In the September 9 issue of the Bangor Daily News, there appeared a front page story under the headline, "Quimby land deal angers hunters." The story quoted Bart Dewolf, the science director of Roxanne Quimby's non-profit conservation foundation. Dewolf gave us a glimpse of the future. "Like other land purchased by the Burt's Bees founder, the property likely will be off-limits to hunters, trappers, snowmobiles and ATVs," he said. "Our primary goal is basically to protect the resources on the property."

When one compares the obvious intent of Roxanne Quimby to lock up vast tracks of land for so called "protection" and then compares her goal to the new backcountry land use designation proposed by the Department of Conservation (DOC), you can't help but be concerned. They are eerily similar. There appears to be a two-pronged, public-private strategy to systematically eliminate traditional use of Maine's wild country.

On August 16, 2006, I received documents from the DOC requested under Maine's Freedom of Information Act. In the cover letter from the commissioner, Patrick McGowan, I was assured that "the objectives of the Backcountry Project were to identify, enhance and showcase backcountry, long distance, human-powered recreational opportunities throughout Maine."

Sounds innocent enough, but slap me for being skeptical. My request asked for the department's

application for a \$100,000.00 grant from the Kendall Foundation of Massachusetts -- the outfit that ultimately funded the Maine Backcountry Project. The application answers in detail five questions the Kendall Foundation had about the Backcountry Project and how the Maine DOC planned to spend the money.

These questions and answers have been condensed:

Question one asks the state to describe "backcountry" and their definition of "wilderness." It also asks, "What kind of and amount of activities would be allowed in these areas?"

DOC's response: "The terms 'backcountry' and 'wilderness' both refer to large areas of wild lands where nature prevails and human alterations are minimal (i.e. primitive hiking and campsites)."

Question two requests a description of the projects "scope" and timeframe. DOC's response: "We propose to conduct this project in three phases over one year." Those phases were listed as:

- Inventory/analysis of protected areas for management as wilderness;
- Identify discrete strategic acquisition/protection opportunities that could link or enhance these wilderness areas/travel routes;
- And identify large areas suited for wilderness management or corridors suited for long -distance travel that are currently unprotected and to propose broad strategies to protect and manage them.

Continued on page 2

JOIN THE PAPER TRAIL (AND SAVE A TREE): IF YOU ARE CONCERNED LIKE WE ARE, READ THIS PAPER, CIRCLE A NUMBER, AND PASS IT ON TO A FRIEND.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Voting on Confusing Ballot Questions (In Particular Question 2)

by Michael Beardsley

First, the Question as it appears on the ballot:

Question 2: Constitutional Amendment

Do you favor amending the Constitution of Maine to state that a citizens' initiative or people's veto petition must be submitted to local or state officials by the constitutional deadline in order to be certified and, in the case of a citizens' initiative, must be filed with the Secretary of State within 18 months?

My recommendation:

Vote No!

My Rationale:

First, in the interests of full disclosure: As a rule, I vote *against* Maine ballot questions that come from the government, particularly Constitutional Amendments that have had very little public discussion or media attention. Usually they are trying to either get more money out of me or they are trying to put more restrictions on what I can do as a citizen.

In this case, this question seeks to limit the citizen's right for redress of grievances currently granted by the Maine Constitution. The goal of this is to make it more difficult for citizen's initiatives to get on the ballot. Despite the confusing wording that seems to be in favor of citizen's initiatives, this particular question seeks a way to get around the Maine Supreme Court decision May 4, 2006 that the 12-month filing deadline was unconstitutional because it sets up a barrier to signature collection. Finally, the wording is confusing -- that always sets off a red flag for me -- my rule of thumb: If it is hard to know, a vote of "No" maintains the status quo.

That is why I am voting No on Question 2.

Here in New England, citizens have a long history of civic involvement and self-governance



from the town hall meeting to the citizen's initiative. As voters, we ought to view any attempts to encroach upon our rights with caution and remain vigilant against attempts by the government to overreach its constitutional authority. Our Founders were suspicious of government when they wrote: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." (10th Amendment to the US Constitution). While I am on that subject, I encourage all voters and students to take some time and read the US Constitution. There are many good sites, but I would recommend The Institute on the Constitution as a great place to start.

Michael A. Beardsley is a Christian Conservative Activist. He runs a political website, www.mikebeardsley.com, and lives in Ellsworth with his wife, Leslie. Currently, Beardsley is running as a Write-In Candidate for the United States Senate.

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Thoughts from Augusta
by Senator Lois Snowe-Mello
United We Stand

Recently Americans paused in a moment of silence to recognize the fifth anniversary of the attack on our nation by Islamic terrorists. If even for two minutes, the people of our nation were once again united in a spirit of commonality and patriotism.

Moments like this, while thankfully rare, stand among the most humanizing experiences mankind faces. The death of fellow citizens who are innocently going about their lives, at the hands of a violent and ruthless enemy who hides among us, has proven for many of us to be an event from which there is no recovery. A constant fear that further attacks could occur at any moment in some unexpected fashion has challenged the sense of stability that Americans had become accustomed to. This is but one of the results our enemy desired. They promise not to rest until all Americans convert to Islam, and hope that creating national weakness will lead to that end.

The extent to which our stability as a nation would be challenged has become increasingly apparent in the years since September 11, 2001. This is occurring despite the impressive fact that there has not been a single attack on American soil subsequent to the one that shattered the clear sky five years ago. In stark contrast to the days following the assault on the World Trade Center when Americans seemed united as never before, America today seems as divided as ever. Why is this?

We are still very much under attack. Video-taped threats from our enemy routinely invade our homes via the evening news and streaming video on the internet. Just last week Abu Hamza al-Muhajir, al-Qaeda's new leader in Iraq after Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was killed in June by U.S. forces, urged Muslims to "Kill at least one American within a period not exceeding 15 days." He continued, "The fire in our blood will never cool, and the swords that have been colored with your blood are still thirsty for more of your rotten heads."

One might expect such inflammatory threats against Americans to appear on the front page of every newspaper in the country. Not so. I found it on page four of Maine's largest newspaper, and not at all in my local daily paper. Contrast that with a recent CNN poll showing the unbelievable result that an increasing number of Americans believe that President George Bush is responsible for the attacks. Asked whether they blame the Bush administration for the attacks, 45 percent said either a "great deal" or a "moderate amount," up from 32 percent in a June 2002 poll. This is outrageous, and speaks more to the blatant bias of our media and their success at deceiving the average American than anything else.

I find it reprehensible that any media outlet would even commission a poll with such a question. The facts are clear: The attack on 9/11 was in the planning stages for up to eight years. President Bush was in office eight months at the time of the attack. It also

completely ignores the reality that this was at least the second attempt by Muslim extremists to take down those symbols of free enterprise and liberty that were the twin towers. A nation at war and under attack by fanatical murderers, who will stop at nothing, even killing innocent women and children to promulgate their warped sense of justice, deserves more responsible behavior from a free press if we are to remain free.

It is worth recalling a bit of American history. In the year 1801, as our young nation was in its 25th year and just after the inauguration of President Thomas Jefferson, a Muslim nation became the first country to declare war on the United States. The Barbary nation of Tripoli, modern-day Libya, along with Morocco, Tunisia and Algiers had been capturing Christian ships, seizing cargo and enslaving captives for more than two centuries. In October of 1803 Tripoli captured the USS Philadelphia and took its 307 crew members hostage. On that occasion President Jefferson expressed a sentiment which could easily be applied to those Americans engaged in the battle today when he said,

"The bravery exhibited by our citizens on that element, will, I trust, be a testimony to the world that it is not the want of that virtue which makes us seek their peace, but a conscientious desire to direct the energies of our nation to the multiplication of the human race, and not to its destruction."

More than two centuries later, radical Islamists are still attempting to hold our nation hostage. Now more than ever we need to hold together as a nation, in defiance of our common enemy. We must not distract ourselves by laying false blame at the feet of our own leaders in an effort to express dissatisfaction with their policies. We must not employ sophistry by claiming support for our troops while decrying their mission. I am not asking people to give up our treasured liberties. I am asking people to recognize the grave threat to those liberties, and to defend them.

As President Bush said in his speech on the fifth anniversary of 9/11, "The attacks were meant to bring us to our knees, and they did, but not in the way the terrorists intended. Americans united in prayer ... came to the aid of neighbors in need ... and resolved that our enemies would not have the last word."

Senator Lois Snowe-Mello represents District 15, including the communities of Auburn, New Gloucester, Durham, and her hometown of Poland. Currently serving her freshman term in the Senate, Lois was a member of the House of Representatives in the 118th, 119th, 120th and 121st Legislative Sessions. Senator Snowe-Mello prides herself on her reputation as being both pro-business and pro-environment as a current member of both the Labor and Natural Resources Committees. She is up for re-election, and intends to campaign tirelessly for the privilege to serve again. Senator Snowe-Mello can be reached at (207)784-9136 or at replouis@megalink.net.

Student Scores Reveal That Colorado Students Match Maine's In Spite Of Taxpayers Bill of Rights

by Frank J. Heller

The debate over TABOR's impact on public education rests on the assumption that spending cuts will only 'hurt' the academic performance of students; and, in turn, that greater spending improves their performance.

I found that Maine's per pupil spending ranks in the top ten in the U.S. (9th); while Colorado's is in the bottom third (32nd). Maine spends nearly twice as much (40% more) on instruction than Colorado does. I also asked Ben DeGrow, an educational policy analyst and former teacher who is with Denver's INDEPENDENCE INSTITUTE to comment with his perspective.

He said that: "In 1991-92, Colorado and Maine spent approximately the same amount of inflation-adjusted dollars per student on K-12 education operating costs. In 1992, Maine's fourth graders significantly outperformed their Colorado counterparts on national tests, while Maine's eight graders had a slight edge over Colorado.

Since TABOR, Colorado has increased inflation-adjusted per-pupil spending on K-12 education operating costs by 9 percent, while Maine (without TABOR) has increased per pupil spending by nearly 40 percent!"

Obviously, Colorado under TABOR has reduced instructional spending, while Maine has joined the top ten spending States.

But what about the results? Has the performance of Maine's students improved nationally on the critical SAT's, which are now the exit test of

record for Maine's schools and a major college admission's threshold? How do Maine and Colorado compare on tests like the National Assessment of Educational Progress?

On the SATs; Maine's White students (approx. 90% of the test takers are White) do very poorly when compared to the Nation's White students; scoring 21 pts. below mean on READING; 23 points below mean on WRITING; and a whopping 30 points below mean on MATHEMATICS.

On the NAEPs, the results are mixed at 8th grade--Colorado's outscore Maine's by 2 points in MATH, Maine's outscore Colorado's by 6 pts. in READING. At fourth grade, the results are similar but what is most revealing is that the identical 39% proficiency scores are above the national average of 35%. Colorado has a significantly large minority (Hispanic, Black, Native American) and ESL (immigrant) student population and score lower than the majority White students.

I can only draw the conclusion that TABOR has not hurt Colorado's academic performance despite severely limiting school spending; while Maine, despite a huge increase in spending, has fallen further behind the rest of the U.S in critical tests require for admission to college!

Frank J. Heller, MPA is an educational policy analyst who writes for the SCHOOL REFORM NEWS, and has authored policy pieces for the CATO INSTITUTE and the HERITAGE FOUNDATION. He can be reached at global3004@gwi.net.

Maine's Backcountry: Squeezing Out Traditional Users
(Continued from page 1)

Question three discusses the membership of the Backcountry Peer Group and how the Kendall Foundation can make the group more effective.

Question four asks for a detailed budget. DOC's response: "The department provided an in depth chart on the different phases and their costs to implement the plan." The final plan has a \$100,000.00 price tag.

Question five asks where the state will find funds to implement the plan once it is completed. DOC felt confident about this one. "This project is a priority of Governor Baldacci's administration," went the answer. "We are optimistic that a bond will be approved to fund the Land for Maine's Future program and that federal conservation funding will continue to be a significant source of revenue."

I intentionally withheld the department's response to the part of question two regarding which activities would be allowed in these areas. The DOC answers this question by referencing Ecological Reserves of at least 1,000 acres as one option. Ecological Reserves allow virtually no activities within their boundaries. Hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, and ATV use, as well as logging, are prohibited.

The DOC later references a new category of land use called "Backcountry Recreational Areas". BRAs, it said, "are allocated for dominant recreation use for the values associated with a special combination of features, including superior scenic quality, remoteness, wild and pristine character, and a capacity to impart a sense of solitude. Most will encompass more than 1,000 contiguous acres. BRAs can be either non-mechanized, roadless areas with outstanding opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of dispersed recreation." In short, these BRAs would permit no motorized travel and no timber harvesting.

BRAs can also be motorized multi-use areas with significant opportunities for dispersed recreation where trails for motorized activities, timber harvesting on a multi-aged basis, and management roads are allowed if permitted by deed or statute.

The definition goes on, "Where timber management is not allowed, wildlife management within these areas will be non-extractive in nature - meaning no hunting or trapping.

DOC officials stated emphatically in two meetings with me that the Backcountry Project was simply a way to map out areas that could be used for people seeking a wilderness experience. Their own documents tell a much different and more ominous story. Step by step, Maine environmentalists are moving to get hunters, fishermen, trappers and snowmobile users out of state lands. After centuries of traditional use, our public lands could become no-go zones for those folks. And as the tourism dollars they bring in vanish, small towns in rural parts of Maine could lose one of their major financial pillars.

Continued in part three: Environmental elitists threaten Maine's historic backcountry.

Rep. David Trahan of Waldoboro is a self-employed logger.

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Enlightenment

by Bob Sanders

At an appointed time in an appointed place, a man sits at a desk with a phone to his right. He scans across the room, and nervously fidgets with a few pieces of paper. The room is full of officials, and a camera crew is there to record this moment, for it's a moment that is destined to become a slice of history, and all the people in the room can feel the weight of this occasion, especially the man seated at the desk. The phone rings, and although it is clear that this phone call is the reason for the assembled officials, the man doesn't pick up the phone until it rings again.

He picks up the phone, almost reluctantly, and mutters a few phrases in Russian, then carefully hangs the phone up. He rubs his hand across his brow and looks past the camera at the people who are off-camera with a half-bewildered stare, saying nothing because no words will suffice.

The man is Mikhail Gorbachev, and he has just spoken to lawyers and officials to begin the process to legally dissolve the Soviet Union. Gorbachev, like all Russians born after the Revolution, grew up steeped in the Communist dogma. When he was a teenager he won the Order of The Red Banner of Labour for helping his father harvest a record crop on their collective farm.

As a young man he would have thought that Communism was the natural order of the universe, and it took a lifetime of studying his world and the world outside of Russia to slowly unwind the conditioning that he had received as a youngster.

By the time he came to power as Premier, it was oppressively clear to Gorbachev that the Soviet economy wasn't just stalled, as some pundits of his time had described, but it was doomed. It was doomed because it stole the people's right to the fruits of their labor, communism's fatal flaw. Mikhail Gorbachev experienced a true political revelation, and performed the ultimate capitulation. That one phone

call stated loud and clear that he, and his entire country, had been living a lie for over 75 years. Mikhail Gorbachev had found the truth.

It could be easily said that Maine's Democratic Party is at the same point of crisis that Mr. Gorbachev found himself at. This thought occurred to me recently as I watched a Democratic speaker routinely spiel off his rhetoric at some function, and I realized that if you listened really, really carefully, even he had troubling reservations about what he was saying.

Maine's socialist hot tub party that has been going on for three decades now has landed us at the top of heap for overall tax load, top of the heap for property taxes adjusted for income, top of the heap for health insurance costs, bottom of the heap for business climate, bottom of the heap for average income. Although the leftiest left wingers would screech their disagreement, the more rational Democrats might be thinking at this point that when this state spending beer bash called Democratic Control comes to an end there is going one huge kickass economic hang-over.

We can learn a valuable lesson from Mr. Gorbachev.

We can chart a new economic course and help the Democrats achieve political enlightenment by not allowing them to run the political wagon until the wheels fall off. Just as the magic of free markets slowly made believers of staunch defenders of Communism in Russia, a friendlier business climate, lower taxes, and a faith in free enterprise will move Maine out of the race with Louisiana for title of Lousiest State Economy.

VOTE REPUBLICAN!

Bob Sanders is a Master Auto Technician who works in Brewer.

The Fourteenth Generation

by Hans Zeiger

The first chapter of Matthew's Gospel opens the New Testament with a genealogy. It is a Christmas list—not a wish list, but a Providential list. It is the outworking of God's Hand in the generations through history, culminating in the birth of Christ.

Matthew 1:17 summarizes the genealogy. "So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations." Fourteen is a Providential number.

Today, two thousand years after the incarnation, we are no less a part of God's great story than the Old Testament prophets and kings, or the New Testament disciples. What wonders might God have in store for America at the brink of 2006? Is there a Fourteenth Generation somewhere in the nation's wings, ready to act upon some great plan of destiny?

Thirteen, of course, is known to the superstitious as the unlucky number. Generational scholars Neil Howe and William Strauss labeled the apathetic, bewildered, ambiguous Generation X the Thirteenth Generation for its strange place in history (born in the late 1960s and 1970s). "Counting back to the peers of Benjamin Franklin," they wrote, "this generation is, in point of fact, the thirteenth to know the American nation, flag, and constitution." After the Thirteenth Generation, Howe and Stauss called the new youth the Millennial Generation, but we might just as well be called the Fourteenth Generation.

Fourteen generations ago was the age of the men and women who first called themselves Americans. It was the elder generation of the Founding Fathers, the contemporaries of the Great Awakening: Jonathan Edwards, Benjamin Franklin, Samuel Adams. About fourteen generations before them lived Christopher Columbus.

The early Americans, from the Puritans to the Founders, considered themselves the objects of God's special favor and the tools of His service in this land. "We know the Race is not to the swift nor the Battle to the Strong," John Page wrote to Thomas Jefferson on July 20, 1776. "Do you not think an Angel rides in the Whirlwind and directs this Storm?" To the American founders, the "Supreme Ruler of the Universe" and "Divine Providence" directed that storm. Patrick Henry wrote to Henry Lee in 1795, "The American Revolution was the grand operation, which seemed to be assigned by the Deity to the men of this age in our country." Dare we presume this generation not called to some task of equal measure in the course of human events, a task that will demand the same brand of highly cultivated courage and faith that attended the American founding?

We have little reason to think ourselves exempt from God's plan, tempting though the alternatives

seem. The world promises a whole lot of stuff to those who make the world's investment. But it isn't for the sake of our prosperity and physical satisfaction that God orders the world; that He does for some higher reason that confounds even the most expert observers of hurricanes and earthquakes and of the rise and fall of nations. We are here, in our generation, in our little moment of time, to serve the King of Kings. Our task is to be conformed to His plan, not He to ours.

America is unique in the world. We can view that uniqueness as a product of ourselves alone, or of something higher, something that in turn gives us meaning. To choose the second vantage would mean revival to a dying civilization. Such a revolution of intellect, morality, culture, and spirit would be the reversal of the prior revolution that even now attributes its aging breaths to retiring Baby Boomers on college campuses, in the old media, in liberal churches, in public high schools. Slow fades the flicker on the marijuana joint; fast rises the Light of the World.

The emergence of a generation, like the incarnation, is a reminder that history is going somewhere.

The vanguard of the Fourteenth Generation is now graduating from high school, in college, entering the work world, and defending America in the Middle East. We were born and raised in prosperity. We are the chief recipients of the financial consumption that I witnessed in the parking lots and checkout lines of my local mall two days before Christmas. We are not protestors or slobs like the Baby Boomers. We are not slackers or radical individualists like the Xers. The leading edge of the generation is proving itself to value community institutions, personal connections, religious tradition, respectful tolerance, self-government, and spiritual purpose.

In the Fourteenth Generation, drug use is down; teen pregnancy and teen abortions are down; optimism is up; support of traditional moral values is up; "reality" is the big word because interest in absolute truth is up. A higher percentage of young people are pro-life than of any other age group. It is a generation of whom liberalism was expected and conservatism is being returned. We are patriotic and ambitious like our grandparents, morally rebellious like our parents. We are now in the beginning stages of that rebellion, and it is a rebellion against rebellion.

If, as President Bush said last year, it is to be "liberty's century," the members of the Fourteenth Generation are the appointed guardians.

Hans Zeiger is a junior at Hillsdale College and author of *Get Off My Honor: The Assault on the Boy Scouts of America*, as well as a forthcoming book about the rise of conservatism amongst young Americans. www.hanszeiger.net

All Maine Matters

Fishery Notes

Farming & Forestry Too!

Published by Maine Free Press, LLC

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Kingman, ME 04451

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10,000 copies distributed throughout rural Maine from Machias to Kittery, North to Fort Fairfield, Stockholm, and Fort Kent, west to Greenville, Dover-Foxcroft, Dexter, Rumford, and Bethel, and points in between and beyond!

Published the first week of each month

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Bingham House, Bethel, Maine



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A publication of the Maine Free Press LLC

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Letters to the Editor

Remember To Vote Yes On #1

To the Editor:

Isn't it interesting that some people and organizations are so afraid of the taxpayer having any control over how much of his money is spent that they are willing to spend over a half a million dollars to oppose the Taxpayer's Bill Of Rights (TABOR)? What does Boston and California unions (AFSCME) have to gain, which makes each of them willing to contribute \$25,000 dollars ?

Of course they didn't have much to lose as most of the money came out of the taxpayers' pockets through taxes given to these organizations. Virtually all of the money used to fight TABOR came from organizations supported by tax dollars. Yet, nearly all of the money used to support TABOR came directly from the pockets of individuals and businesses from Maine. For proof of these figures, go to www.main-campaignfinance.com and/or www.mmta.com/Support%20Sheet.pdf.

Why has the Maine Municipal Association, a non-profit, non-partisan organization, been willing to spend \$110,000 (again out of the taxpayers' pockets). And why have they spent more money and time to train and direct all municipal officers to "educate" their voters to the inappropriateness of TABOR? (See the Maine Municipal Associations website, and go to their TABOR link.) Obviously, they think the voters are too ignorant to be able to think for themselves. Thankfully there are numbers of municipal officers who chose to oppose Maine Municipal Association and make their own informed decision about TABOR.

Why would the National Education Association donate \$465,000 to oppose TABOR rather than put that same money into improving the educational system?

The scare tactics that have been used to oppose TABOR have totally insulted the intelligence of Maine taxpayers. Do they think the Maine taxpayer is too ignorant to research the facts before arriving at the voting booth? I would also suggest that the answer to all of the above questions is FEAR. Fear that they can no longer reach deep into the taxpayers' pockets and spend like there is no tomorrow.

Will we allow the scare tactics of these national organizations and special interest groups to determine something so important as the outcome of the Taxpayer Bill of Rights, or will Maine's own taxpayers decide?

REMEMBER TO VOTE YES ON #1.

Hilda Mulherin
Dover-Foxcroft, ME

Supporting the Middle Class

Dear Editor,

The full-page ad by Democracy Maine states the reason given for voting against TABOR is that it "will make tax cuts impossible"!

Huh? As if the opposition is doing anything about tax cuts in the first place. The failure of government to provide tax relief and tax reform has brought about this referendum. TABOR is not about cuts!!! I am a "re-covering" Bureaucrat having worked in Portland City hall for 3 years. To a Bureaucrat, a cut is no increase in spending! TABOR stops the increase without our (e.g. taxpayers...) approval.

Middle class Americans have no control over any of our rising expenses. Health care, insurance, tuition, food, energy costs are all beyond our control. However, the government is supposed to be ours. We should be able to control these costs. Decisions on spending are in the control of a bunch of faceless, entrenched bureaucrats who do not have our interest in mind.

I am voting for TABOR to support the middle class and to address how spending takes place at the local level and perhaps to have the faceless bureaucrats come out and justify their proposals to spend my hard earned income.

Sincerely,

Anthony J. Donovan
Portland, Maine

Baldacci's Campaign Funds

Dear All Maine Matters,

Governor Baldacci seems to be everywhere this election season. Somone in Maine can't even sneeze without the governor calling a press conference. He's been in Lincoln and in other places where, with no help from the state of Maine, a business has grown or begun.

Yet, there he is, calling a press conference, claiming credit for every good thing that anyone might do in the state, even if it's something - like business - which his administration has opposed since its onset.

Shouldn't these expenses be coming out of his reelection fund, rather than paid for by the taxpayers of Maine?

Richard Jordan
Bangor, Maine

"It's The Economy, Stupid."

I recall the famous campaign slogan that brought down an administration.

Well, here we are again and in Maine it still is "The economy, stupid" and it's the taxes, stupid.

It has been thirty years of same old, same old and our government officials still don't get it. The citizens went through the arduous task of getting the Taxpayer Bill of Rights on the ballot to provide for a reasonable and effective way of limiting the rampant growth in government and putting control back in the hands of the people.

It is not a silver bullet, but it slows the growth in government and requires that our officials ask us if they want to spend more.

It is a necessary start. Let's send this critical message to our officials:

Taxpayer Bill of Rights; It's the answer, stupid...

Vote YES on #1.

Melinda Loring,
Maine

Leaders and Compasses

Editors,

The Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church states that "from the first moment of his (her) existence, a human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person - among which is the inviolable right of every innocent being to life." The Catholic Church maintains the strongest objection to abortion, teaching that abortion denies the most fundamental of all human rights - the right to exist.

There are no cases in which the Roman Catholic Church condones abortion. The act is considered murder, and it is always murder, and there are no circumstances whatsoever in which murder is considered to be a legitimate moral option.

Any Catholic involved in an abortion, whether mother or medical practitioner, may be excommunicated from the Church and its Sacraments, as can any Catholic who condones or encourages the procedure.

Pope Benedict XVI says that refusing Holy Communion to pro-abortion politicians is a "doctrine of the Church." The Roman Catholic Diocese of Maine agrees.

How can it be then, that Governor John Baldacci, a pro-abortion politician who professes to be a Catholic, has not been refused Communion?

And how can a man without a moral compass be considered a leader?

James Taggart
Presque Isle, Maine

Halloween Scare Tactics

Some of the opposing arguments that I am hearing concerning the Taxpayer Bill of Rights seem to fit the mood of the Halloween season in that they are designed to scare the taxpayer. I listen to the usual wails of despair over the utter destruction this would cause and I want to reply to some of the common myths that I hear over and over from the groups that currently feed off the taxpayer dollars:

Myth 1: Colorado is a disaster/school children are freezing

The State Superintendent of Schools for Colorado labeled this "mitten story" as an urban myth; however, it still keeps growing. First the children had to wear mittens to school, and then coats, then they were stepping over the frozen bodies of their fellow students to get to their seats. In reality, Colorado teachers are paid on average \$8,000 more per year than Maine teachers, their school system ranks in the top ten in the country and their SAT testing scores are 100 points higher than Maine. One key difference, their taxes don't go to support an immense administrative school bureaucracy. Maine supports one superintendent and staff for each 4,500 students. Colorado only has one per every 70,000 students. The savings is substantial without any impact on teachers or students. In addition, since Colorado enacted their taxpayer bill of rights, more people moved there than even live in the state of Maine. The appeal can't be just the scenery. After all, Maine has wonderful scenery. Taxpayer bill of rights a disaster for Colorado?.....I don't think so.

Myth 2: The homeless will starve:

Since the budget has a guaranteed increase each year, if the homeless weren't starving last year they won't be starving this year. The increase for this year under the legislation would have been about 4%. However, without the Taxpayer Bill of Rights, the ever increasing burden of unreasonable property taxes will be making a lot more of us homeless pretty soon.

Myth 3: Our representatives know best, we should trust them with these tax decisions:

Hmmm, Maine has had the highest taxes in the nation for 10 years running, the economy is depressed, and our young people are leaving in droves and all under the leadership of our representatives. There is something wrong with this picture. Are our leaders clueless or just tone deaf? I say that the Taxpayer Bill of Rights will provide them with that extra guidance they clearly need.

Myth 4: We can't afford the Taxpayer Bill of Rights because our state is rapidly aging (this from an AARP representative):

He is right, the state is rapidly aging. That is occurring because the tax burden is so high and the business climate is terrible, therefore, the economy is depressed. Our young people can't get jobs and can't afford to live here so they are leaving. The school age population has fallen dramatically in the last ten years. We need the reasonable growth limits of the Taxpayer Bill of Rights to help reverse this trend.

Myth 5: Oil and gas prices are high so the government can't survive on a budget:

Oil and gas prices are high for every taxpayer in Maine and yet ALL of us manage to survive on a budget. The answer is to PRIORITIZE and get more efficient. There are many examples including the proposed party for teachers that is being held in Augusta in the middle of a school day and is projected to cost taxpayers up to \$100,000 dollars for transportation costs and substitute teachers. Why not hold it after school on Friday or on a Saturday morning? A second example is the \$900,000 proposed to landscape government property in Augusta. In these tough times can't we live with just cutting the grass? The problem in all three instances is prioritization. The Taxpayer Bill of Rights will force that discussion.

Myth 6: A tyranny of the minority will prevail under the Taxpayer Bill of Rights:

It is typical for a town to have three or five members on a town council. Newport, for example has five. The number of selectmen needed to approve any additional spending ABOVE the Taxpayer Bill of Rights guideline is, the same as the number needed currently to approve the budget. Once that happened, the excess spending request would go to the people and require a simple majority. The so called tyranny of the minority is once again a smoke screen. The Maine people have always been generous about funding increases that make sense. This is a very reasonable process to handle excess spending and every time I hear this argument I ask myself; why are our representatives so afraid of the people?

The crushing burden of taxes is a legitimate concern for Maine voters and the Taxpayer Bill of Rights is a very reasonable approach. I love the Halloween season, but can do without the myths designed to scare voters. Let's deal with the facts and start to solve some of Maine's problems.

Sincerely,

Robert Smyrski
Edgecomb, Maine

Letters to the Editor are most welcome and even encouraged! Email editor@allmainematters.com or send it via USPS to PO Box 788, Kingman, ME 04451.

We do publish anonymous letters to the editor, or those signed with a pseudonym.

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“

How strangely will the Tools of a Tyrant pervert the plain Meaning of Words!

”

Samuel Adams



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We've had 32 years of Democrat rule in the Maine House of Representatives.

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It is time we had a majority party that will listen to the Maine people

and make government work for them instead of making them work for government

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Vote Republican on November 7. We *can* do better!

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Paid for by the Maine Republican Party

“

Do not separate text from historical background. If you do, you will have perverted and subverted the Constitution, which can only end in a distorted, bastardized form of illegitimate government.

”

James Madison

Fundamentals Of The Taxpayer Bill Of Rights

(Continued from page 1)

The policy issue here is an economic one, and here the tax-takers need to think clearly where their real interests lie. I was a tax-taker in New Jersey for thirty-two years. New Jersey academic tax-takers receives far better salaries than their counter-parts in Maine. This is not because taxpayers in NJ are more generous. It's because they are more prosperous. Although that state has its own taxation problems (and they are getting worse) it pays a smaller portion of its wealth for these higher salaries. In short, Maine's teachers will never receive a New Jersey salary from a Maine economy in its present condition.

The economic issue, therefore, is whether Maine's tax burden is a drag on its economic development. There is a wealth of evidence to show that it is. It is significant that no one running for any office anywhere in this state is running on a platform of increasing taxes. The mere threat of the coming referendum has produced plans and promises for reducing the tax burden. It is immaterial whether you accept that Maine is the first, second or third most heavily taxed state in the country. None of these rankings can possibly be justified.

So, let's all agree that Maine should NOT be burdened with higher taxes. The Taxpayer Bill of Rights aims to prevent that. Dana Connors of the Maine Chamber of Commerce opposes the Bill. He reasons thus: "As important as lowering our tax burden is...there's also the need for investment."

This gives the game away. We are hearing a lot about "investment" these days. The Democratic Party platform has a lot to say about "investment." The verbs "tax" and "spend" appear nowhere.

This brings us to a consideration of advantage. Ninety organizations have come out against the Taxpayer Bill of Rights. All of these organizations represent tax consumers or are themselves tax consumers. Some are using tax funds to defend themselves against taxpayers. They are outspending the defenders to the taxpayers by a huge margin with the help of abundant contributions from out-of-state organizations who dread the very idea of tax limitation of any kind. It matters not at all to these organizations whether Maine's economy tanks. This will not affect them in the least. What matters to them is the threat to their own stake as tax predators. Maine's tax resistance movement is part of a national resistance movement.

By contrast, Mary Adams, Jack Wibby and all their allies and volunteers have no expectation of personal gain. They are not even paid for their efforts.

John Frary was born in Farmington, where he now resides. He graduated from U of M, Orono. He did graduate work in Political Science and in Ancient, Medieval, Byzantine and modern history at U of M., Rutgers and Princeton, completing his Masters degree along with all courses and examinations for the PhD. He worked in administration and as a professor of history and political science at Middlesex County College in Edison, NJ for 32 years. He is associate editor of The International Military Encyclopedia, has been assistant editor of Continuity: A Journal of History as well as editor and publisher The LU/English Newsletter. After returning to Maine he was chosen to be the conservative columnist for The Kennebec Journal and The Morning Sentinel. He was dismissed from this position in December for refusing to drop his criticism of the Dirigo Health Plan. He is currently chairman of the Franklin County Republican Committee.

“

Freedom prospers when religion is vibrant and the rule of law under God is acknowledged.

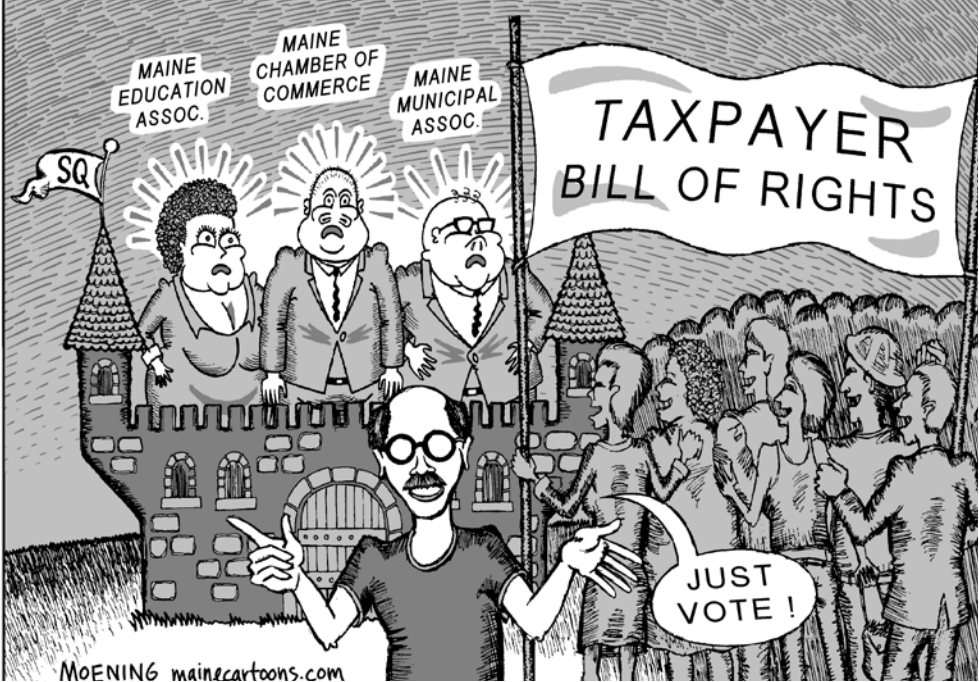
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Profiles in Rural Maine

By Ken Anderson
Bethel, Maine



West Parish Congregatinal Church

Located in near the Vermont border, in the south-western part of the state, Bethel is a town that I’ve been through many times, being someone who prefers the back roads to the interstate highways, but it is not one that I’ve spent much time in, other than to eat or to deliver copies of “All Maine Matters” to the stores there which carry our publication.

Bethel is located on both sides of the Androscoggin River, along Route 2, between Newry and Gilead.

The Androscoggin enters the town from Gilead near the middle of the southern part of the town, flowing east for about two and a half miles before dropping in a southeastern direction for an equal distance, at a point opposite Bethel Hill, where it flows in a northeastern direction to the mouth of the Bear River near Newry. In all, approximately seventeen miles of the river are within the town of Bethel. There are no falls or significant rapids in this portion of the river.

The Androscoggin River was created by glaciers during the last ice age, some 15,000 years ago. When the glaciers retreated, the valley was made up of a network of lakes linked by short rivers. As the waters receded, a true river emerged, and the intervals mark the places where the lakes once were.

The Sunday River rises in the northern Ma-hoosuck Range and enters Bethel from Newry about two miles west from the mouth of the Bear River, flowing in a southeasterly direction, entering the Androscoggin about one and a quarter miles from the point where it enters the town.

Bear River flows south from Grafton, through Newry, emptying into the Androscoggin near Newry Corner; while the Alder River takes in water from a number of ponds, and flows northeast through the southern part of Bethel, where it is joined by several small tributaries before entering the Androscoggin near Bethel Hill.

Mill Brook enters the southeastern part of Bethel, flowing north, running along the foot of Bethel Hill, where its flow joins the Androscoggin River a half a mile below. This stream furnished the power for the town’s first grist mill.

Other waterways within the town of Bethel include Bog Brook, Chapman Brook, and Alder Brook.

There are also several rises in the land, in and around Bethel. Grover Hill, in the western part of town, named for early settlers, was known for its agriculture and fruit. Swan’s Hill, just east of the town center, was named for James Swan, Jr., also an early settler. Bird Hill, once known as Berry Hill, hosted several successful farms, as did Kimball Hill and Howard Hill, near the eastern borders of the town. Paradise Hill, located near Bethel Hill, was better known for the view that it afforded than for its agriculture.

There are several mountains in or near Bethel, included in the Appalachian Mountain range. Near the town’s northwestern border is Ellingwood Mountain, also known as Anasagunticook. Sparrowhawk Mountain is a little west of Grover Hill, and Waterspout Mountain can be found south of Swan’s Hill, near the center of town. Walker’s Mountain, named for the former owner of Walker’s Mill, is in the southern part of the town. There are several bald bluffs, including Goss Mountain, Bryant’s Mountain, and the well-known Sugarloaf mountains, not too far away. In the eastern part of town is a group of five mountains, none of them very high, Kimball Mountain among them.

While I am well aware that I say much the same about every Maine town that I profile, Bethel is among the most beautiful places that one could live in Maine.

In the late 1600s, the coast of Maine was settled by Europeans, mostly English, from the mouth of the Piscataqua to the Penobscot Bay, but the inland areas were the domain of the various Indian tribes. When King Philip’s War broke out in 1675, even the coastal settlements were destroyed, their inhabitants killed, captured, or driven from their homes.

When the war came to an end, many of the colonists returned to find that France had taken advantage of the Indian war against the English, laying claim to the territory bordering the St. Lawrence, and, allied with some of the Indian tribes, were staging raids upon English settlements from their base in Quebec.

This brought the attention of the English government, whose military was eventually successful in putting an end to French rule in Canada, and in what was later to be known as Maine.

It was not an easy fight, however; nor did they accomplish it alone. British soldiers, however courageous, were not familiar with the sort of warfare conducted by the French, and especially their Indian allies. New England troops, made up of men who were raised in the forests of North America, were better able to cope with the challenges of such a fight.

The capture of Louisburg, a French stronghold a Cape Breton, was accomplished by New England troops under the command of Sir William Pepperell, a native of what was to become Maine. King Philip’s War was brought to an end through a combined effort of troops from Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut.

The expedition against Canada in 1690, under the leadership of Sir William Phips, a native of Maine, resulted disastrously. Many of the soldiers who participated in that battle never returned home, while many of the survivors were badly injured. While the Massachusetts Bay Colony was unable to pay its soldiers, land was in abundance.

To compensate the soldiers who participated in bringing King Philip’s War to an end, seven townships were surveyed and granted, of which two were in the district of Maine. Other townships were granted to the descendants of those who accompanied Phips in the Canada expedition; these were known as Canada townships.

New settlements began in the inland areas of Maine, especially along the banks of the rivers. Fryburg, located on what is now the Maine-Vermont border, south of Bethel, was the first town settled in what is now Oxford County, in the year 1762. Originally known as Sudbury Canada, Bethel was created by grant in 1768, and settled six years later.



Odean Hall houses the town hall and police department.

Those of you who are familiar with American history will know that the Revolutionary War broke out at about that time, slowing the progress of the development of the town considerably, as many of those who had just settled the area joined the ranks of the patriot army, while others who were planning to settle in the area found themselves otherwise occupied.

None of the original grantees ever settled in the new township. Some sold their rights, while others allowed their land to be taken for taxes, and a few passed their rights on to their sons.

The war took a lot out of everyone. Soldiers were paid little, and in a currency which had depreciated greatly. Bethel was populated mostly by veterans of our War for Independence, who were not wealthy people.

When Maine split from Massachusetts, Dr. John Grover, from Bethel, was a member of the convention formed to frame a constitution for the new state. William King, who was president of the convention, was elected its first governor.

The records of Sudbury Canada have been lost, so it’s impossible to state with any accuracy who the first settlers of the town may have been. The historian, William Lapham, suggests that the first person who bought land in the area with the intention of settling there was Jonathan Keyes of Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, who purchased his land from Luke Knowlton in 1772. Knowlton had purchased the right of Nathaniel Gray, Jr., whose father had served in the Canada expedition. We do know that Keyes sold four lots of land to a Samuel Ingalls of Fryburg a couple of years later, at which time the deed stated that he had built a house and a couple of barns on the property, indicated that the land had been occupied.

Elizabeth, the wife of Samuel Ingalls, is said to be the first white woman to spend the winter in Sudbury Canada, in 1776, but the dates of the Ingalls family residency are uncertain and contradictory.

An early resident of Sudbury Canada was Joseph Twitchell who, along with four of his sons, became residents of the new township. His son, Eleazer, built the first mill. Other early settlers, establishing homes in the upper part of town, were Benjamin and Abraham Russell, Jonathan Clark, and James Swan. In the lower part of the township, near the Samuel Ingalls farm, were Jesse Duston, John York, Amos Powers, and Nathaniel Segar.

John Grover came to Sudbury Canada after having served in the War for Independence, settling in the western part of the township. Amos Hastings, another veteran of the war, married Elizabeth Wiley, Grover’s sister-in-law, settling first a Middle Intervale, where his home served as the town house for many years before he moved to a farm on the north side of the river. Samuel Marshall lived about three miles below Bethel Hill, on what was known as the Sanborn Farm.

Being remote, Bethel never became a battleground in the War for Independence, except for an Indian raid that resulted in the capture of two early residents, Segar and Clark, who were taken to Montreal where they were held by the British until after the surrender of Cornwallis, when there was a prisoner exchange; and the death of two others.

Land along the rivers, particularly the Androscoggin, and in the western part of town, were settled many years before other parts of town. The belts of the intervalle were considered prime property, as the soil was rich, free of stones, and level. The higher ground adjacent to the intervalle were used for building and pasturing. The east and central parts of the town are broken by hills and mountains, the soil is rocky, and tillage expensive, so it was among the last to be settled.

Twitchell’s grist and saw mill, on Mill Brook, at the foot of Bethel Hill, were the first buildings erected in the township, except for some primitive camps. The first frame house was built for the use of the miller in 1779.

For several years, there was no regular miller. People brought their own grain to the mill, ground their own flour, and left it open for the next visitor.

In 1790, the first census of the United States was made. At that time, Sudbury Canada had been settled for eleven years, and count shows that there were 60 families in the plantation, with a total population of 324.

Apart from those already named, early residents of the township included Jonathan Bartlett, who had come to Sudbury Canada in 1779, but was not mentioned as having been here at the time of the Indian raid. Others were Jonathan Bean and his son Daniel, who settled on a farm that had been deserted by David Marshall a year before, and another son, Josiah, who built a farm near Samuel Ingalls.

Dr. Moses Mason came to Bethel at the age of ten, three years after the town was incorporated. He became a physician and businessman, as well as one of the town’s most prominent citizens during its formative years, serving in several public offices, including two terms in the state congress from 1833-1837. His home has been restored and now belongs to the Bethel Historical Society.

In 1800, at the time of the second census, Sudbury Canada had become the town of Bethel, Maine, and the population had nearly doubled. Several of the heads of family from the previous census are not found, and are assumed to have died or moved from the area. Surnames found in the 1800 census include Adams, Adley, Annis, Andres, Ayer, Bean, Bartlett, Barton, Brown, Carter, Capen, Chapman, Clark, Coffin, Duston, Emes, Ellenwood, Estis, Farwell, Fenno, Frost, Greenwood, Gage, Goodenow, Gossom, Gould, Grover, Hasings, Holt, Howard, Kilgore, Kimball, Lane, Locke, Mason, Merrill, Morse, Newland, Noble, Powers, Russell, Robinson, Seagar, Spofford, Stearns, Swan, Sweat, Towne, Twitchell, Willis, Wheeler, and York. There were 622 people residing in Bethel at the dawn of the 19th century.

Prior to 1815, the closest post office was at Waterford, about twenty miles away. The first settlers of Sudbury Canada arrived on foot, making the journey through the woods to Fryeburg, Paris, Norway, and even to Portland. Once roads were opened, the trip could be made on horseback. Early carriages were primitive, the bodies resting directly upon the axles. In the early days, mail was brought into Oxford County by post riders who made the circuit on horseback, bringing mail from Portland once a week, weather permitting. In 1815, a post office was established at Bethel Hill, and Dr. Moses Mason was appointed the first postmaster.

When the Paris and Rumford road was built in 1797, it passed through the southeastern part of town, opening new area to the housing market. The road entered Bethel near the southeastern corner of town and, after passing across the corner, entered Milton Plantation about a mile from the point where it entered Bethel. The first settler on this road within the town of Bethel was Francis Hemmingway, who cleared land and built a house, but moved back to Rumford within a few years, leaving his farm to Benjamin Sweat, whose family remained in the area for generations. Others included Porter Kimball, who later sold his farm to Abijah Lapham, who moved to Bethel in 1822; James Daniels, Caleb Besse, Jedediah Estes, and the Bartletts, Abijah and Enoch, who lived on the place at different times.

The Churches

West Parish Congregational Church

Most of the early residents of Sudbury Canada, or Bethel, were members of some church in their last place of residence, and by far the greater number of them were Congregationalists, which was the standing order in Maine for many years. As the official state religion of the time, everyone was taxed to support the Congregational Church until they were freed from that obligation by an act of the court.

Congregational ministers often came to Bethel, gave religious instruction to the settlers, baptized their children. Among them were the Reverends Coffin, Taft, and Fessenden.

On September 8, 1796, a meeting was held at West Parish, to discuss the hiring of a regular minister. In 1798, Caleb Bradley came, taught school, and preached on the Sabbath; but he later settled in Westbrook. In 1799, Rev. Daniel Gould came as a candidate for the pastorate, and was elected to fill that position the following year. Ezra Twitchell and James Grover were elected to serve as deacons. Gould served in that capacity until 1809, when he had a falling out with the congregation. The church was without a pastor for ten years, when Henry Sewell was installed as pastor, but was asked to leave before having served a full year. The Rev. Charles Frost, installed as pastor in 1822, served until 1850, and there were many others since then.

Initially, the West Parish congregation met in a building located on the banks of the river, but it was later moved to its current location on Bethel Hill. The last sermon preached in the old meeting house was in February of 1848, by Rev. Frost.

The West Parish Congregational Church, built in 1847, was the first place of worship built in the Bethel area. Garland Chapel was added in the 1890s.

2nd Congregational Church

There was some dissatisfaction over the move from the banks of the river to Bethel Hill, as it was an inconvenience to those who then had to cross the river in order to attend church, and there were times of the year when this was impossible.



Gould Academy

Bethel, Maine

In September of 1848, a petition was presented to the parent church by those living on the north side, asking for a separate organization. A vote was taken, and passed by a majority, the result being that a church edifice at Mayville was built to accommodate the new church.

1st Baptist Society

Among the early settlers were some who were Calvinist Baptists, and ministers of that denomination came to visit on occasion, preaching on Sunday. Others, who were unsatisfied with the selection of Rev. Gould to serve the West Parish, left the Congregational denomination and joined with the Baptists.

In 1795, a Baptist church was organized, and Rev. John Chadbourne preached there. The church declined, however; until at the end of seven years, there were only two members. In 1800, the Rev. Benjamin Cole replaced Chadbourne and the church enjoyed slow but steady growth. In 1805, they were incorporated in the name of the First Baptist Society in Bethel.

The Rev. Ebenezer Bray was ordained as pastor in 1807, serving for five years. The Rev. Arthur Drinkwater was the next, followed by Elder Daniel Mason, who came in 1817 and remained until his death in 1835, and Rev. Benjamin Donham, a native of Bethel, who increased the membership to a peak of 132 in 1843.

1st Methodist Church

The Methodists started out small, but grew to be one of the largest denominations in town. Circuit preachers visited Bethel off and on, beginning about 1798, and a Methodist Society was formed in the town in 1800, with fourteen members, but their first church building was not erected until the 1860s, which was nearly ruined by a hurricane in 1891, to be replaced with a Queen Anne style building in the 1920s.

Early circuit preachers who came to Bethel included the Revs. Nicholas Snething and John Martin. The Methodists shared a meeting house with the Baptists.

Freewill Baptists

The membership of the Freewill Baptist congregation was primarily made up of settlers in the west part of town. In 1818, the denomination built a church there. This church, soon after it was gathered, united with the Sandwich Quarterly meeting.

There were no large increases in membership until 1839 when, under the pastorate of the Rev. Samuel Haselton, forty people were added to he rolls. Another church was built by the society at West Bethel in 1844. Its membership declined over the years however, and the building was converted into a tenement, which burned to the ground in 1916.

Universalist Society of Bethel

Early in the history of Bethel, there were those who believed in the paternity of God and the fraternity of man, and who could not reconcile this relationship with the idea of eternal punishment in hell. There were not enough Universalists to form an organization or to support a preacher, so they attended the meetings of other denominations, united in their disagreement with much of what they heard from behind the pulpit. In 1847, Joseph Twitchell and seven others incorporated the first Universalist Society in Bethel.

In 1853, they erected a church, and the Rev. Zenas Thompson was chosen pastor. The Universalist Church disbanded in the 1930s, and its building now serves as the Bethel Church of the Nazarene.

Union Church

The Bethel Union Church was built in West Bethel, in the area known as “Gander Corner,” in 1897, and is still an active congregation.

In 1979, the Western Auto store on Route 26, across the street from Telstar High School and near the Catholic Church, was converted into a Gospel Center, still active now as the Bethel Alliance Church.

The Middle Intervale Church in East Parish, built in 1816, was restored in the 1980s. The church at East Bethel constructed about 1830 was being used for occasional services in 1981. The former Christian Science Church on Chapman Street, built in 1924, became a Masonic Lodge in 1952.

Active Churches in Bethel Today

- The West Parish Congregational Church, on Church Street, is served by the Rev. Virginia Rickeman.
- The Bethel Church of the Nazarene, near the West Parish Congregational, is pastored by Chuck Mason.
- The United Methodist Church, on Main Street, with Geoffrey Gross as its pastor.
- The Pleasant Valley Bible Church, was built on Flat Road in West Bethel in 1980, and is now served by Pastor Aaron McNally.
- The Bethel Union Church, on Route 2 in West Bethel, pastored by the Rev. Earl Bell.
- Our Lady of the Snows, on Walkers Mill Road, built in 1968, is served by the Pastor Rev. Gerald Levesque.
- The Bethel Alliance Church is near the Catholic Church, on Walkers Mill Road, pastored by Kevin Bellinger.

There is also a Church of Christ, pastored by Keith Hamel, an Episcopal House Church, pastored by the Rev. Gwyneth Bohr, and a 7th Day Adventist Church, as well as other churches in nearby towns.

Industry

Industry in Bethel has always been related to wood harvesting and processing. In 1886, the town assisted in the establishment of a chair factory in 1886, producing a variety of chairs, but it went bankrupt in 1912.

Bethel Steam Company ceased to exist after WWII. The former worker houses and company store were private residences in 1981. The mills and factories along Mill Brook and Alder River at South Bethel have been gone for a few decades.

Today, what industrial activity there is can be found along the railroad tracks. In 1981, there was, at South Bethel, P.H. Chadbourne Company; Bethel Village: L.E. Davis Lumber Company, and Hanover Dowel. At West Bethel, there was Bethel Furniture Stock, Kendall Dowel, and Newton-Tebbetts.

Today, the Maine Dowel Mill, on Route 2 in West Bethel appears to be in operation, although I’m not sure if they’re still making dowels. Kennebec Lumber has a mill site nearby, but I’m not sure if the mill itself is still in operation, although the site appears to be used as a log yard. Specialty Timberworks has been producing custom post and beam frames since 1992, and there may be some other small operations

Forestry and farming were important to the town in the early days. But now, the smaller farms have been absorbed by larger ones and, while lumber interests are still in operation in the area, fewer than three percent of Bethel’s population are employed in forestry or agriculture.

With Gould Academy, a co-educational college preparatory high school serving 240 boarding and day students, as well as Telstar Regional Middle/High School, a public school serving students in grades 6-12 from the communities of Andover, Greenwood, Newry, Woodstock, and Bethel, education is the town’s largest industry.

A change in the school laws eliminated the district school system in the 1890s and the consolidation of the elementary schools. The brick grammar school opened in 1894 and new shingle style schools were built in the 1920s in Bethel Village, East, South, and West Bethel. In 1951, the Crescent Park school ws built for the elementary grades, replacing the brick grammar school, which was razed.

Eventually, the outlying schools were closed and, in 1965, Bethel voters joined the towns of Andover, Greenwood, Newry, and Woodstock to form SAD 44. A new high school was then built - Telstar Regional - in 1967-68. Gould Academy then became a private college preparatory institution.

Taking up much of Bethel’s historic Church Street, Gould Academy is impressive, as one might expect at a cost of \$37,550 for an academic year for boarding students, who make up the bulk of the student body.



Androscoggin River



West Bethel Union Church



the Bethel Church of the Nazarene once housed the Universalist Society of Bethel.

Gould Academy began educating students in 1835 when the school opened, as Bethel High School, for three terms. The following year, the school reopened as Bethel Academy for 134 students, who paid \$4.00 for tuition and room and board. The Rev. Daniel Gould of Bethel, left his entire estate to the academy in return for it being renamed after him upon his death in 1843.

From its inception, the school served both the children of the town of Bethel as well as a coeducational boarding population, which was unique in its time.

Gould Academy became a private boarding and day school in the fall of 1969, after Telstar High School opened its doors to Bethel and the surrounding area. Since that time, the Gould Academy has focused on a college preparatory curriculum.

Approximately 45% of its student population come from Maine, another 15% from New England, and the remainder from throughout the country and world.

Telstar Middle and High School are named after the Telstar satellite, the first to transmit wireless communications between Europe and North America. The North American site was in Andover Maine, which is included in SAD-44, of which Telstar is a part. The majority of Bethel’s children attend SAD-44 schools, including Telstar.

With a population of just under 2,500 people in 2000, Bethel is not a large town by any standards, but its active downtown area is one of a much larger town, with dozens of shops, historic churches, and a large, active historical society. You can find a vegan restaurant in Bethel, but no fast food places or national chain stores.

Bethel today, is a town of country clubs, resorts, inns, historic homes, beautifully restored, and picturesque bed and breakfasts. The area surrounding Bethel Village, in North Bethel, and in West Bethel, there are some homes that average people might be able to afford; but this is true of many towns.

Thanks to the following publication for much of the historical background:

History of Bethel, Maine
By William B. Lapham
Published 1981 (Originally published in 1891)

Photographs of rural Maine taken by
Ken Anderson, unless otherwise attributed.

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Ken Anderson is, among other things, the editor of the online news outlet Magic City Morning Star, on the web at <http://magic-city-news.com>. He is running for state representative in District 10, which includes Millinocket, East Millinocket, Medway, and part of the Unorganized Territory.



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North Road

Muhammad - Prophet or Imposter?

by Michael W. Pajak

For as long as history can remember, the followers of Muhammad have stamped their feet like spoiled little children throwing a temper tantrum after being denied another piece of candy. Except that after they finish stamping their feet they burn buildings, bomb weddings, and behead any who dare criticize their childish behavior. There are those who, in an effort to make the peace, grant legitimacy to Islam, throwing them that piece of candy by conceding that their founder Muhammad is indeed the last and most important prophet of God. I, for one, do not.

Orestes Augustus Brownson wrote in 1850, “The powerful genius of Mahomet made him dream that he could do what Caesar and Alexander did, that he could enslave the world; and he matured his plans with care. The political aspect of the world was very inviting to an ambitious imposter, for the Western Empire had fallen, and the strong arm won the spoils; the Eastern was getting old and crazy, and all Asia was nearly independent of the Greek Emperors. Mahomet gave laws which were singularly adapted to please man’s corrupt nature, and his laws were piously kept. He won his soldiers to his party by promising them rich booty, and by keeping his promises.”

If Brownson were around today, you can bet there would be a fatwa, a death sentence, declared on him for daring proclaim such an opinion.

Opinions are not looked upon highly in the Islamic view of the world. More recently, Ibn Warraq, outspoken critic of Islam who has written extensively on what he views as the oppressive nature of Islam, concludes that traditional Islamic interpretations of its history and the origins of the Qur’an are fictitious and based on nothing more than historical revisionism aimed at forging a religious Arab identity to combat Christianity. Warraq, like so many dissident authors throughout the history of Islam, is forced to write under a pseudonym for his own safety. Warraq says of his work Quest for the Historical Muhammad (Prometheus Books, 2000), “I wanted to point out that there were a large number of ex-Muslims, and I wanted to hold them up as examples to ex-Muslims to come out of the closet. I want people from Islamic countries to breathe a freer air because of the courage of these particular apostates. I wanted to open up the debate on Islam – and after all, freedom of conscience is a very basic human right which is denied many people in Islamic countries.” Sounds like an occasion for another fatwa to me. It’s no wonder ex-Muslims are afraid to come out of the closet.

Last month Pope Benedict XVI quoted Byzantine emperor Manuel II Paleologus when he said in a late 14th-century conversation with a Persian citizen, “Show me just what Mohammed brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached.” The Pope was

careful to mention thrice that this was a quote and not his personal belief. Yet the reaction by the international Muslim community was entirely predictable: churches firebombed, a 65-year old nun shot seven times in the back as she returned from a charity hospital where she helped feed and bathe sick Muslims, and complete silence from the mythical “moderate” Muslims. What else could we expect from the same community that rioted over editorial cartoons? The same religion that issues death warrants for fiction writers? The very same religion whose leaders proclaim the swords of their followers are still thirsty for the blood of the infidel?

Contrast the collective behavior of the worldwide Muslim community with that of slain nun Sister Leonella, one of the longest-serving foreign members of the Roman Catholic Church in Somalia. As she was dying from her bullet wounds, Sister Leonella used her final moments to forgive those Muslims who shot her in the back. “I forgive, I forgive” she whispered in her native Italian as she drew her last breaths.

The history of Muslim aggression against the Christian West can be found in the very first moments following the birth of Islam. Throughout its early history, the Church of Christ, the Catholic Church, was under attack by forces of evil. To quote Brownson again, “The world for three hundred years groaned beneath the tyranny of Rome, and during that long period the worship of Christ was proscribed, and his children hunted to the death; the prisons were choked with them, the wild beasts were glutted with their flesh, the ground was red with their blood; they were pitilessly murdered, sometimes singly, sometimes by hundreds, sometimes by thousands. This was the first great sifting; it was a trial of the Church by fire and by sword, a determination to crush her by treating her children as convicted enemies of the Empire and of the immortal gods.”

From the Romans to the south, to Nordic hordes of Godless barbarians to the north, those proclaiming allegiance to Christ found no safe haven in which to worship, and were granted no quarter by their numerous enemies. Despite their treatment, and in accordance with the teaching of the Lord, the Catholic Church, observed Brownson, “took these things to her bosom, and her supernatural warmth made those bones live again; she made them Christians, and they became men.” He continued in his treatise St. Peter and Mahomet; or the Popes Protecting Christendom from Mahometanism, “If the Church ever could really fear an enemy, she would have been hopelessly affrighted at Mohometanism. All her other trials were accompanied with some solace for her wounded heart. The persecutions were bitter, but she often had a little time to breathe; she felt that such a violent state of things could not endure long.”

But, this new enemy, the brainchild of a very eloquent and intelligent man, promised not to be so easily endured. Again Brownson: “Mahomet unfurled his banner, and in a twinkling it waved over a great host. He went forth to make converts and subjects. The process was quite simple. He held his tablet of laws in one hand, and the sword in the other, and in most cases the people chose to live and believe in one God, and in his prophet, Mahomet.” The new found faith, with promises of eternal earthly pleasures in heaven, not least of which was a mansion full of virgins for those whose lives where lost spreading the oppressive beliefs of Islam, wiped out or enslaved all non-Muslims from Persia to the gates of Vienna. Brownson, perhaps prophetically, wrote, “And thus, in six hundred years after the death of the Prophet, Mahometanism had nearly fulfilled its purpose; its universal sovereignty seemed only to be a question of time. It had blasted Asia; it had destroyed Africa; it was the terror of the Mediterranean; and it was advancing slowly but surely upon the last abiding-place of Christianity, converting, like a cancer, healthy flesh into a mass of corruption and hopeless deformity. The Church of God never saw such an enemy, for Mahometanism was evidently a heresy that would live for very many ages.”

And here we are, generations, centuries later, and Islamic leaders the world over are exclaiming such pronouncements as this one from the Mujahideen Shura Council in response to the Pope’s quoting Manuel II, “You infidels and despots, we will continue our jihad and never stop until God avails us to chop your necks and raise the fluttering banner of monotheism, when God’s rule is established governing all people and nations.” As Orestes said in 1850, so it seems to still be true, “Tell men that they can serve God and Mammon at the same time, charge them to indulge their passions freely, secure to them a heaven whose first law is sensual gratification, make ignorance the first commandment, and erect this scheme of lust and rapine into a religious system, and what remains to insure it long life? Punish apostasy with death. This stern law of the Prophet is as faithfully kept now as it was under Al Raschid.”

I pray we have the resolve to withstand this new era of Islamic aggression.

Michael W. Pajak lives in Woolwich and can be reached at mwmpajak@yahoo.com.



Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Church

A Riches To Rags Tale

by Fritz Spencer

For the man who falls from a great height, plunging headlong through the empty air until he lies stunned and broken on the ground, the world presents a perplexing sight. In his pain and terror, the world grows dim, and begins to slip away. If the victim resists the onrush of darkness, he may survive. But if he abandons the struggle for existence, the blackness enters him and claims him for its own.

In the gloom and despair of the Great Depression, an impoverished nation sought out tales of heroes who broke the iron grip of poverty through the strength of their own character. Fiction, popular music, and above all the cinema, told the stories to eager audiences – the tale of the impoverished flower girl who rose to the ranks of high society – the tale of the bankrupt stockbroker from Boston whose sterling character propelled him back to his rightful place in society. These rags-to-riches tales of the thirties taught that character always wins out over adversity, no matter how hopeless the predicament. The native character of the New Englander - a love of truth, a tender heart, and a willingness to help those in need, was a form of wealth which could neither be taken away nor defeated.

Today, some seventy years later, the life which is due all men and women - a life of prosperity, free from want - eludes many of our fellow citizens. In a strange reversal of fortune, what was once the most prosperous state in the nation is now quite nearly the poorest. Soup kitchens, food stamps, and homeless shelters are on the rise, and Maine ranks dead last in the race for prosperity. Politicians tell us there are now a “First Maine” which resembles Massachusetts, and a “Second Maine” which clings to an outmoded way of life. Newcomers to the First Maine prosper, while native Mainers from the Second Maine become the brunt of jokes.

There is another form of poverty, one that is far worse, and that is the poverty which results when one is stripped of his cultural heritage. As the rags-to-riches tales tell us, we can survive a poor economy, but we can never survive the loss of our own heritage. Nothing can be more ill advised than for Mainers to seek an economic solution to each and every problem of society. Maine will not save itself by becoming part of a global community. Nor will Maine preserve its heritage by becoming like the rest of the nation.

If Mainers neglect the real source of their greatness - the kindness, the gentleness, and the love of their fellow citizens, which are the inheritance of every true Mainer - theirs indeed will be a dizzying fall from the heights, a true riches-to-rags story.



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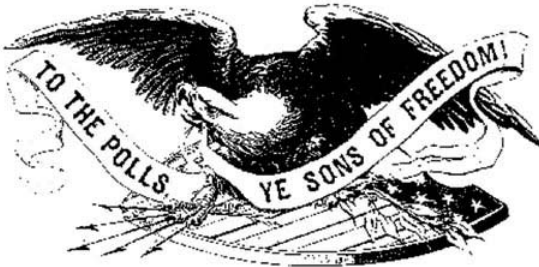
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The Global Warming Deceptions Continue

by Tom DeWeese

They call us the “astro-turf” crowd --those of us who dispute the dire claims of global warming. Let one of us get on the radio or in front of an audience and the accusation is made: “You’re just a lackey of big business.” Nothing we say can have any serious meaning because we are paid by big oil or some other corporation and so must have an ulterior motive.(By the way, I or the American Policy Center have never received a single dime from big oil corporations). Of course, there is always a double standard in the name calling business.

Now comes this report from Senator James Inhofe, Chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. In a speech before the Senate, Inhofe told of the media’s double standard in reporting on the global warming issue.

Said Inhofe, “On March 19 of this year ‘60 Minutes’ profiled NASA scientist and alarmist James Hansen, who was once again making allegations of being censored by the Bush administration. In the segment, objectivity and balance were again tossed in favor of a one-sided glowing profile of Hansen.”

Inhofe continued, “The ‘60 Minutes’ segment made no mention of Hansen’s partisan ties to former Vice President Al Gore or Hansen’s receiving of a grant of a quarter of a million dollars from the left-wing Heinz Foundation run by Teresa Heinz. There was no mention of Hansen’s subsequent endorsement of her husband John Kerry for President in 2004.”

Concluded Inhofe, “Many in the media dwell on any industry support given to so-called skeptics, but the same media completely fail to note Hansen’s huge grant for the left-wing Heinz Foundation. The foundation’s money originated from the Heinz family ketchup fortune. So it appears that the media makes a distinction between oil money and ketchup money.”

Meanwhile an effort is underway by global warming worshipers to stop, at all costs, the hated global warming skeptics. These are scientists and commentators (including yours truly) who disagree with the sermons of the church of global warming.

CBS correspondent Scott Pelley has justified excluding scientists skeptical of global warming alarmism from his segments because he considers skeptics to be the equivalent of “Holocaust deniers.”

California’s attorney general sued the six largest U.S. and Japanese automakers, including GM, Ford and Toyota for damages related to greenhouse-gas emissions, even though there is no proof that global warming exists, or that carbon dioxide is a problem (there are now

or that carbon dioxide is a problem (there are now studies available to the contrary). The California suit is really an effort to enforce the Kyoto global warming treaty, even though the U.S. has never ratified it.

It is interesting to note that in preparing for the suit, California Attorney General Bill Lockyer filed requests in federal court to force auto makers to disclose all documents and communications between the companies and the so-called climate skeptics. California accuses the climate skeptics of playing a major role in spreading disinformation about global warming.

California obviously has become a leading practitioner of the policy of “globally acceptable truth” as advocated by Donald Sagar of the Eden Institute (The DeWeese Report, Volume 12, Issues 7 & 8). Sagar disavows the value of science, caring more to kill honest debate and instead to impose strict limitations on how people think. Those who speak out with a difference of opinion, like global warming skeptics, are to be silenced as dangerous. It is the end of free speech and free thought. California’s attorney general has now brought Sagar’s crazed rantings into the nation’s legal system.

However, the growing body of proof that global warming is the greatest hoax ever perpetrated on human civilization cannot be denied. For example:


Global warming preachers claim this summer’s heat wave in the eastern part of the country is evidence of global warming.

In fact, the recent heat wave is nowhere close to breaking record temperatures set in 1930 – fifty years before fears of human caused catastrophic global warming supposedly began. “That summer has never been approached...” said global warming skeptic and the state of Virginia’s climatologist Patrick Michaels.

Global warming preachers claim that of the 21 hottest years ever measured, 20 have occurred within the last 25 years. And the hottest was this year’s recent heat wave.

In fact, according to official temperature records of the Climate Research Unit at the University of East Anglia in the UK, the global average temperature did not increase between 1998 and 2005.

Tom DeWeese is president of the American Policy Center and editor of the DeWeese Report. Contact information: apcmail@americanpolicy.org



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- Carroll: 43.7 acres on a ridge. Bare ledge in places so your camp will never move with the frost. Land looks to the southeast with possible lake views if you trim some trees. This property abuts some 30,000 acres of timber company land. Snowmobile trail goes right by. \$16,400
- Carroll: 56.6 acres on a ridge with a breeze. Good gravel road access and a view of the distant lakes. Nicely wooded and full of moose and deer. \$28,300
- Prentiss: 5 acres on a paved road with power and phone. Nice knoll for a camp or house, apple trees, driveway all in and a tractor trailer box will be left on site if you want it. It will be gone if you don't want it. \$11,900
- Greenbush: 42.7 acres surrounded on 3 sides by timber company land. Gently sloping and well wooded ground. Good spot for a get-away or hunting camp. Only 20 minutes from the university and a half hour to Bangor. This won't last long. \$19,900
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Origins and Dangers of the ‘Wall of Separation’ Between Church and State

by Professor Daniel L. Dreisbach

The following is adapted from a lecture delivered at Hillsdale College on September 12, 2006, during a Center for Constructive Alternatives seminar on the topic, “Church and State: History and Theory.”

No metaphor in American letters has had a greater influence on law and policy than Thomas Jefferson’s “wall of separation between church and state.” For many Americans, this metaphor has supplanted the actual text of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and it has become the locus classicus of the notion that the First Amendment separated religion and the civil state, thereby mandating a strictly secular polity.

More important, the judiciary has embraced this figurative language as a virtual rule of constitutional law and as the organizing theme of church-state jurisprudence. Writing for the U.S. Supreme Court in 1948, Justice Hugo L. Black asserted that the justices had “agreed that the First Amendment’s language, properly interpreted, had erected a wall of separation between Church and State.” The continuing influence of this wall is evident in the Court’s most recent church-state pronouncements.

The rhetoric of church-state separation has been a part of western political discourse for many centuries, but it has only lately come to a place of prominence in American constitutional law and discourse. What is the source of the “wall of separation” metaphor so frequently referenced today? How has this symbol of strict separation between religion and public life become so influential in American legal and political thought? Most important, what are the policy and legal consequences of the ascendancy of separationist rhetoric and of the transformation of “separation of church and state” from a much-debated political idea to a doctrine of constitutional law embraced by the nation’s highest court?

The Wall that Jefferson Built

On New Year’s Day, 1802, President Jefferson penned a missive to the Baptist Association of Danbury, Connecticut. The Baptists had written the new president a “fan” letter in October 1801, congratulating him on his election to the “chief Magistracy in the United States.” They celebrated his zealous advocacy for religious liberty and chastised those who had criticized him “as an enemy of religion[.] Law & good order because he will not, dares not assume the prerogative of Jehovah and make Laws to govern the Kingdom of Christ.” At the time, the Congregationalist Church was still legally established in Connecticut and the Federalist party controlled New England politics. Thus the Danbury Baptists were outsiders’a beleaguered religious and political minority in a state where a Congregationalist-Federalist party establishment dominated public life. They were drawn to Jefferson’s political cause because of his celebrated advocacy for religious liberty.

In a carefully crafted reply, the president allied himself with the New England Baptists in their struggle to enjoy the right of conscience as an inalienable right-not merely as a favor granted, and subject to withdrawal, by the civil state:

Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should “make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,” thus building a wall of separation between Church & State.

This missive was written in the wake of the bitter presidential contest of 1800. Candidate Jefferson’s religion, or the alleged lack thereof, was a critical issue in the campaign. His Federalist foes vilified him as an “infidel” and “atheist.” The campaign rhetoric was so vitriolic that, when news of Jefferson’s election swept across the country, housewives in New England were seen burying family Bibles in their gardens or hiding them in wells because they expected the Holy Scriptures to be confiscated and burned by the new administration in Washington. (These fears resonated with Americans who had received alarming reports of the French Revolution, which Jefferson was said to support, and the widespread desecration of religious sanctuaries and symbols in France.) Jefferson wrote to these pious Baptists to reassure them of his continuing commitment to their right of conscience and to strike back at the Federalist-Congregationalist establishment in Connecticut for shamelessly vilifying him in the recent campaign.

Several features of Jefferson’s letter challenge conventional, strictly secular constructions of his famous metaphor. First, the metaphor rests on a cluster of explicitly religious propositions (i.e., “that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that

he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship”). Second, Jefferson’s wall was constructed in the service of the free exercise of religion. Use of the metaphor to restrict religious exercise (e.g., to disallow a citizen’s religious expression in the public square) conflicts with the very principle Jefferson hoped his metaphor would advance. Third, Jefferson concluded his presidential missive with a prayer, reciprocating his Baptist correspondents’ “kind prayers for the protection & blessing of the common father and creator of man.” Ironically, some strict separationists today contend that such solemn words in a presidential address violate a constitutional “wall of separation.”

The conventional wisdom is that Jefferson’s wall represents a universal principle concerning the prudential and constitutional relationship between religion and the civil state. In fact, this wall had less to do with the separation between religion and all civil government than with the separation between the national and state governments on matters pertaining to religion (such as official proclamations of days of prayer, fasting, and thanksgiving). The “wall of separation” was a metaphoric construction of the First Amendment, which Jefferson time and again said imposed its restrictions on the national government only (see, e.g., Jefferson’s 1798 draft of the Kentucky Resolutions).

In other words, Jefferson’s wall separated the national government on one side from state governments and religious authorities on the other. This construction is consistent with a virtually unchallenged assumption of the early constitutional era: the First Amendment in particular and the Bill of Rights in general affirmed the fundamental constitutional principle of federalism. The First Amendment, as originally understood, had little substantive content apart from its affirmation that the national government was denied all power over religious matters. Jurisdiction in such concerns was reserved to individual citizens, religious societies, and state governments. (Of course, this original understanding of the First Amendment was turned on its head by the modern U.S. Supreme Court’s “incorporation” of the First Amendment into the Fourteenth Amendment.)

The Metaphor Enters Public Discourse

By late January 1802, printed copies of Jefferson’s reply to the Danbury Baptists began appearing in New England newspapers. The letter, however, was not accessible to a wide audience until it was reprinted in the first major collection of Jefferson’s papers, published in the mid-19th century.

The phrase “wall of separation” entered the lexicon of American law in the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1878 ruling in Reynolds v. United States, although most scholars agree that the wall metaphor played no role in the Court’s reasoning. Chief Justice Morrison R. Waite, who authored the opinion, was drawn to another clause in Jefferson’s text. The Reynolds Court, in short, was drawn to the passage, not to advance a strict separation between church and state, but to support the proposition that the legitimate powers of civil government could reach men’s actions only and not their opinions.

Nearly seven decades later, in the landmark case of Everson v. Board of Education (1947), the Supreme Court “rediscovered” the metaphor and elevated it to constitutional doctrine. Citing no source or authority other than Reynolds, Justice Hugo L. Black, writing for the majority, invoked the Danbury letter’s “wall of separation” passage in support of his strict separationist interpretation of the First Amendment prohibition on laws “respecting an establishment of religion.” “In the words of Jefferson,” he famously declared, the First Amendment has erected “‘a wall of separation between church and State’ That wall must be kept high and impregnable. We could not approve the slightest breach.” In even more sweeping terms, Justice Wiley B. Rutledge asserted in a separate opinion that the First Amendment’s purpose was “to uproot” all religious establishments and “to create a complete and permanent separation of the spheres of religious activity and civil authority by comprehensively forbidding every form of public aid or support for religion.” This rhetoric, more than any other, set the terms and the tone for a strict separationist jurisprudence that reached ascendancy on the Court in the second half of the 20th century.

Like Reynolds, the Everson ruling was replete with references to history, especially the roles played by Jefferson and Madison in the Virginia disestablishment struggles in the tumultuous decade following independence from Great Britain. Jefferson was depicted as a leading architect of the First Amendment despite the fact that he was in France when the measure was drafted by the First Federal Congress in 1789.

Black and his judicial brethren also encountered the metaphor in briefs filed in Everson. In a lengthy discussion of history supporting the proposition that “separation of church and state is a fundamental American principle,” an amicus brief filed by the American

can Civil Liberties Union quoted the clause from the Danbury letter containing the “wall of separation” image. The ACLU ominously concluded that the challenged state statute, which provided state reimbursements for the transportation of students to and from parochial schools, “constitutes a definite crack in the wall of separation between church and state. Such cracks have a tendency to widen beyond repair unless promptly sealed up.”

Shortly after the Everson ruling was handed down, the metaphor began to proliferate in books and articles. In a 1949 best-selling anti-Catholic polemic, American Freedom and Catholic Power, Paul Blanshard advocated an uncompromising political and legal platform favoring “a wall of separation between church and state.” Protestants and Other Americans United for the Separation of Church and State (an organization today known by the more politically correct appellation of Americans United for Separation of Church and State), a leading strict-separationist advocacy organization, wrote the phrase into its 1948 founding manifesto. Among the “immediate objectives” of this new organization was “[t]o resist every attempt by law or the administration of law further to widen the breach in the wall of separation of church and state.”

The Supreme Court frequently and favorably referenced the “wall of separation” in the cases that followed. In McCollum v. Board of Education (1948), the Court essentially constitutionalized Jefferson’s phrase, subtly and blithely substituting his figurative language for the literal text of the First Amendment. In the last half of the 20th century, the metaphor emerged as the defining motif for church-state jurisprudence, thereby elevating a strict separationist construction of the First Amendment to accepted dogma among jurists and commentators.

The Trouble with Metaphors in the Law

Metaphors are a valuable literary device. They enrich language by making it dramatic and colorful, rendering abstract concepts concrete, condensing complex concepts into a few words, and unleashing creative and analogical insights. But their uncritical use can lead to confusion and distortion. At its heart, metaphor compares two or more things that are not, in fact, identical. A metaphor’s literal meaning is used non-literally in a comparison with its subject. While the comparison may yield useful insights, the dissimilarities between the metaphor and its subject, if not acknowledged, can distort or pollute one’s understanding of the subject. If attributes of the metaphor are erroneously or misleadingly assigned to the subject and the distortion goes unchallenged, then the metaphor may alter the understanding of the underlying subject. The more appealing and powerful a metaphor, the more it tends to supplant or overshadow the original subject, and the more one is unable to contemplate the subject apart from its metaphoric formulation. Thus, distortions perpetuated by the metaphor are sustained and even magnified. This is the lesson of the “wall of separation” metaphor.

The judiciary’s reliance on an extra-constitutional metaphor as a substitute for the text of the First Amendment almost inevitably distorts constitutional principles governing church-state relationships. Although the “wall of separation” may felicitously express some aspects of First Amendment law, it seriously misrepresents or obscures others, and has become a source of much mischief in modern church-state jurisprudence. It has reconceptualized-indeed, misconceptualized-First Amendment principles in at least two important ways.

First, Jefferson’s trope emphasizes separation between church and state—unlike the First Amendment, which speaks in terms of the non-establishment and free exercise of religion. (Although these terms are often conflated today, in the lexicon of 1802, the expansive concept of “separation” was distinct from the narrow institutional concept of “non-establishment.”) Jefferson’s Baptist correspondents, who agitated for disestablishment but not for separation, were apparently discomfited by the figurative phrase and, perhaps, even sought to suppress the president’s letter. They, like many Americans, feared that the erection of such a wall would separate religious influences from public life and policy. Few evangelical dissenters (including the Baptists) challenged the widespread assumption of the age that republican government and civic virtue were dependent on a moral people and that religion supported and nurtured morality.

Second, a wall is a bilateral barrier that inhibits the activities of both the civil government and religion-unlike the First Amendment, which imposes restrictions on civil government only. In short, a wall not only prevents the civil state from intruding on the religious domain but also prohibits religion from influencing the conduct of civil government. The various First Amendment guarantees, however, were entirely a check or restraint on civil government, specifically on Congress. The free press guarantee, for example, was not written to protect the civil state from the

press, but to protect a free and independent press from control by the national government. Similarly, the religion provisions were added to the Constitution to protect religion and religious institutions from corrupting interference by the national government, not to protect the civil state from the influence of, or overreaching by, religion. As a bilateral barrier, however, the wall unavoidably restricts religion’s ability to influence public life, thereby exceeding the limitations imposed by the First Amendment.

Herein lies the danger of this metaphor. The “high and impregnable” wall constructed by the modern Court has been used to inhibit religion’s ability to inform the public ethic, to deprive religious citizens of the civil liberty to participate in politics armed with ideas informed by their faith, and to infringe the right of religious communities and institutions to extend their prophetic ministries into the public square. Today, the “wall of separation” is the sacred icon of a strict separationist dogma intolerant of religious influences in the public arena. It has been used to silence religious voices in the public marketplace of ideas and to segregate faith communities behind a restrictive barrier.

Federal and state courts have used the “wall of separation” concept to justify censoring private religious expression (such as Christmas creches) in public, to deny public benefits (such as education vouchers) for religious entities, and to exclude religious citizens and organizations (such as faith-based social welfare agencies) from full participation in civic life on the same terms as their secular counterparts. The systematic and coercive removal of religion from public life not only is at war with our cultural traditions insofar as it evinces a callous indifference toward religion but also offends basic notions of freedom of religious exercise, expression, and association in a pluralistic society.

There was a consensus among the founders that religion was indispensable to a system of republican self-government. The challenge the founders confronted was how to nurture personal responsibility and social order in a system of self-government. Tyrants and dictators can use the whip and rod to force people to behave as they desire, but clearly this is incompatible with a self-governing people. In response to this challenge the founders looked to religion (and morality informed by religious faith) to provide the internal moral compass that would prompt citizens to behave in a disciplined manner and thereby promote social order and political stability. The literature of the founding era is replete with this argument, no example more famous than George Washington’s statement in his Farewell Address of September 19, 1796:

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, Religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of Patriotism, who should labour to subvert these great Pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of Men and citizens And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion [R]eason and experience both forbid us to expect that National morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

Believing that religion and morality were indispensable to social order and political prosperity, the founders championed religious liberty in order to foster a vibrant religious culture in which a beneficent religious ethos would inform the public ethic and to promote an environment in which religious and moral leaders could speak out boldly, without restraint or inhibition, against corruption and immorality in civic life. Religious liberty was not merely a benevolent grant of the civil state; rather, it reflected an awareness among the founders that the very survival of the civil state and a civil society was dependent on a vibrant religious culture, and religious liberty nurtured such a religious culture. In other words, the civil state’s respect for religious liberty is an act of self-preservation. The unfortunate consequence of 20th-century jurisprudence is that the First Amendment, designed to protect and promote a vital role for religion in public life, has been replaced with a wall of separation that, in the hands of the modern judiciary, has restricted religion’s place in the polity.

The second half of this article will appear in the December issue of *All Maine Matters*.

Daniel L. Dreisbach is a professor in the School of Public Affairs at American University in Washington, D.C., as well as the William E. Simon Fellow in Religion and Public Life in the James Madison Program at Princeton University. He received his D.Phil. from Oxford University and his J.D. from the University of Virginia. He is author or editor of numerous books, including Thomas Jefferson and the Wall of Separation Between Church and State; The Founders on God and Government; Religion and Political Culture in Jefferson’s Virginia; and Real Threat and Mere Shadow: Religious Liberty and the First Amendment.

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Straight From Nana Beth’s Kitchen!

For this month’s recipes I thought I’d keep the Apple Season and Thanksgiving in mind. Hope you find something here you like.

Broccoli and Chicken Casserole

This casserole was an easy choice for this months recipe, it’s so easy to make & you can freeze it for that unexpected company, or just make it in advance for those times you don’t have time to cook, and it also takes care of all of that left over turkey or chicken we never know what to do with around the holidays.

My kids actually got mad at me, the first time I made it for a luncheon and they saw it go out the door, so I always had to make 2 after that, one for the family and one for gatherings.... I guess they REALLY liked it!!!

Bake at 350*
30 minutes

1st layer:

In 13” x 9” or lasagna dish, break up chicken/turkey in small pieces to cover bottom of ungreased dish

2nd layer:

Bring a 4 qt. Pan of water to boil. Place large bag of frozen broccoli florets in boiling water. Hard boil for 2 minutes, then drain. Spread over chicken/turkey.

3rd layer:

- 2 cans of cream of chicken soup
- ¾ bag of shredded mozzarella cheese. (I’ve used a cheddar mix of cheeses and it’s also very good)

Combine the two ingredients in saucepan over medium heat, stirring constantly till the cheese melts. Take off burner, then in a measuring cup add:

- ½ cup mayonnaise
- ½ teaspoon of lemon juice

Mix together then add to cheese mixture. If it’s a little too thick, I add a little milk to make it spread easier.

Pour & spread mixture over broccoli florets evenly

4th layer:

- ½ stick of butter or margarine, melted in the pan that you cooked the broccoli in.

Then add 1 large canister of Stove Top Stuffing mix to the melted butter.

Mix then add:

Hot water or hot chicken broth, enough to lightly moisten bread

Spread mixture over the top. Cover & refrigerate for at least ½ hour before baking.

Bake uncovered. Turn your oven down if you notice the top starting to brown too quickly.

This can be frozen after it’s been cooked and cooled. Just place in a cool oven and reheat, uncovered.

Apple Brownies

I used to make this when the kids were in high school. They loved coming home to the smell of cinnamon and apples. These brownies didn’t stay around long.

Bake at 350* for 45 minutes

- ½ cup melted shortening
- 3 medium or 2 large apples (peeled and cut up into small pieces)
- 1cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon of vanilla
- ½ cup walnuts
- 1 cup of flour
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon of salt
- ½ teaspoon of cinnamon

Place in 8”x8” pan sprayed with PAM. Double for a 9”x 13” pan.

Apple Dumplings with Cinnamon Sauce

Definitely a “comfort” dessert. Simple to make, and if you like Apple pie, you’ll love this old fashioned variation.

Make pie pastry for the amount of dumplings you plan to make.

Pastry for 9” 2-crust pie makes 6 dumplings, for 8” 2-crust pie, 4 dumplings.

Roll out pastry a little less than 1/8” thick, & cut into 7” squares.

Pare and core a medium, tart, juicy apple for each dumpling. Set aside.

Prepare syrup

For 6 dumplings, boil together for 3 minutes:

- 1 cup sugar
- 3 Tablespoons butter or margarine
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon

For 4 dumplings, boil together for 3 minutes:

- 2/3 cups of sugar
- 2 Tablespoons butter or margarine
- ¼ teaspoon of cinnamon

For 6 dumplings, fill cavities of apple with mixture of:

- ½ cup of sugar
- 1½ teaspoon of cinnamon

For 4 dumplings, fill cavities of apples with mixture of:

- 1/3 cup of sugar
- 1 teaspoon of cinnamon

Place a dab of butter on top of each apple:

- 1 Tablespoon of butter/margarine

1. Place an apple on each square of pastry. Fill core cavity with sugar & cinnamon mixture. Dot each apple with a dab of butter/margarine.
2. Bring opposite points of pastry up over the apple. Overlap, moisten and seal.
3. Lift carefully, making sure you place each apple dumping a little apart in baking dish, 13”x9” for 6, 8”x8” for 4. Pour hot syrup around dumplings.
4. Bake immediately until crust is nicely browned & apples are cooked through. (Test with a fork) Serve warm, with whipped cream, or ice cream.

Taco Dip

My mother-in-law passed this next recipe on to me. Not only is it GREAT for the holidays, or for those informal get-togethers that your never sure what to bring, I also found out that it’s great for the “sports nuts” in my house to munch on during the games. The taco flavor is a sure hit with this appetizer.

- 1-8 oz. package of cream cheese, softened
- 8 oz. of sour cream
- 1 teaspoon of seasoned salt
- 1 teaspoon of garlic powder

Mix together, spread on bottom of serving dish or large plate

Spread over mixture, layer in order as follows:

- 1/3 head of lettuce, chopped
- ½ cup of green peppers, chopped
- ¼ cup black olives, chopped
- 1 tomato, chopped

Spread an 8 oz. package of sharp shredded cheddar cheese, over the top of vegetables Sprinkle hot sauce over the top

Cover & refrigerate. Serve with your favorite brand of Taco chips.

Hope you enjoy the recipes, and may you all have a Happy Thanksgiving surrounded by family & friends. Blessings to all.

Stay safe, and happy cooking.

Nana Beth

If you have recipes you'd like to share, or questions about a recipe you can't find, please contact Nana Beth at ec06@localnet.com



“

I’ve never been able to understand why a Republican contributor is a ‘fat cat’ and a Democratic contributor of the same amount of money is a ‘public-spirited philanthropist’.

”

Ronald Reagan



Androscoggin River

A Discussion With Stu Kallgren, of the Maine Leaseholder’s Association

The Maine Leaseholder’s Association was organized in 1990 to address the concerns of leaseholders in the State of Maine. Stu Kallgren has served as its president since 1996.

AMM: It’s been a couple of months since we last met. What’s been going on that may be of interest to leaseholders?

STU: Well, we haven’t met with the landowner’s group yet, but the representatives from both sides have been chosen and we know who we’ll be meeting with.

AMM: Good, so that will be coming about soon. Anything else?

STU: On the 16th of this month, I sent a letter to Marcia McKeague, with Katahdin Timberlands. I’d like to have that letter published on our web site and in All Maine Matters, if possible.

AMM: Sure, we can do that. Minus the header and footer, the text of the letter is as follows:

October 16, 2006

Dear Marcia,

In light of the increase in valuation of camp lots by the state bureau of taxation, lease costs have increased dramatically. The board of directors of The Maine Leaseholders Association asks that you adjust our formula for determining lease prices. We feel the “valuation x percent” should be reduced by 2.5%.

Furthermore, we ask that you reconsider extending the free lease for all retired employees of GNP, Georgia Pacific, Bowater and Inexcon.

We would be happy to meet with you to discuss this.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Stu Kallgren, President
Maine Leaseholders Association

STU: Thanks, I think it’s important, especially for the retirees, who were given promises of free leases. I think they should honor these promises and the promises made by previous owners. Retirees are on fixed incomes, so this is a tremendous burden to them.

AMM: I notice that the letter is addressed to Katahdin Timberlands. Is they the only landowner that you’re having this problem with?

STU: Katahdin Timberlands has the highest lease costs in the State of Maine, by far. This needs to be addressed.

AMM: I see that the letter was sent nearly two weeks ago. Have you heard from them yet?

STU: Not a word.

AMM: Anything else?

STU: We have a new board of directors. Their names should be up on the web site by tomorrow. You might want to remind people that they can access our web site at www.maine-leaseholders.com.

AMM: I can see that the site has been recently redesigned, and that it’s a little easier to find your way around.

STU: Yes, and we’ll be trying to update it more often than we have been.

AMM: Thanks a lot for coming by. We’ll be looking forward to hearing from you next month.



KEN ANDERSON

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- 20 years of experience as an EMT & Paramedic as well as EMT Instructor
- Retired small business owner - private ambulance company providing services to several communities
- Co-publisher of All Maine Matters - a monthly newspaper for rural Maine
- Board Member of the Katahdin Time Exchange
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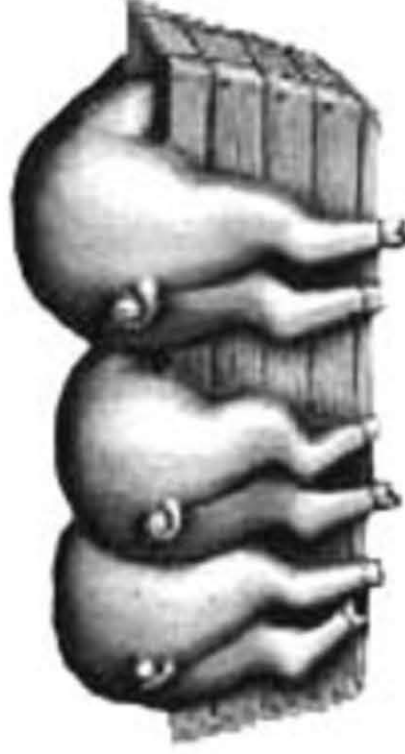
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