

# the Undercurrent

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"It was as if an underground stream flowed through the country and broke out in sudden springs that shot to the surface at random, in unpredictable places." Ayn Rand

## DEATH TO "DIPLOMACY" WITH IRAN

European "diplomacy" with Iran—supported by Washington—necessarily strengthens Iran.



by *Elan Journo*

European diplomats, who courted Iran in an attempt to halt its suspected nuclear weapons program, regret that "diplomacy" did not dissuade Iran from its plans. But this failure was foreseeable.

That diplomatic effort was touted as a reasonable way to settle the dispute over Iran's suspected nuclear weapons program without any losers. By enticing Iran to the negotiating table, we were told, the West can avoid a military confrontation, while Iran gains "economic incentives" that can help build its economy. But the negotiations—backed also by the Bush Administration—only strengthened Iran and turned it into a greater menace.

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### OBJECTIVISM

*The Undercurrent's* cultural commentary is based on Ayn Rand's philosophy, Objectivism. Objectivism, which animates Ayn Rand's fiction, is a systematic philosophy of life.

It holds that the universe is orderly and comprehensible, that man survives by reason, that his life and happiness comprise his highest moral purpose, and that he flourishes only in a society that protects his individual rights.

In these pages we hope to defend these values. To learn more about the ideas behind them, you can begin by reading Ayn Rand's books, such as *The Fountainhead* and *Atlas Shrugged*, or by visiting [aynrand.org](http://aynrand.org).

## Domestic Security Secures Our Demise

Congress must rein in the president's power—by giving him a War Declaration.



by *Felipe Sediles*

In recent months, Congress has raised concerns over the president's use of warrantless wiretaps and his approval of a proposed take-over of major U.S. sea ports by a United Arab Emirates-owned company. In the case of warrantless wiretaps, the president is criticized for the excessive use of power. In the case of his permissive handling of the ports deal, the president is criticized for the failure to use power.

The president's critics never seem to be satisfied, yet they never identify a principle that should

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# The Self-Censorship Epidemic on College Campuses

Campus critics of Muhammad cartoons misunderstand—and reject—free speech

by Kelly Cadenas



The recent cartoon controversy has tested America's willingness to defend one of its constitutionally protected rights: the right to speak freely. In recent months, the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* published twelve cartoons depicting Mohammad and ridiculing the teachings of Islam. Islamic fundamentalists responded with violent protests, death threats, and demands for apology. In a valiant effort to express solidarity and support for the principle of free speech, other newspapers across Europe joined the crusade by republishing the cartoons. Sadly, American publications like *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* succumbed to the religious sensitivities of Muslims and declined to proudly assert their rights.

As ardent defenders of free speech, we at *The Undercurrent* wondered how campus publications were addressing this issue. We were thrilled to learn that the *Daily Illini*, the student newspaper at the University of Illinois, was first to reprint the controversial caricatures. But like many Americans around the country, students and faculty at the U of I failed to understand the true nature of free speech—and thus failed to support the *DI*.

Fifteen campus organizations expressed their disapproval in a *DI* article: "It is unacceptable to use free speech as a platform for Islamophobia...Free speech is not a license to propagate content that is deliberately incendiary and serves no constructive purpose. We are not asking for censorship. We are asking for responsible journalism."

Humair Sabir communicated a similar view in his guest column in the *DI*: "According to the constitution, the editor in chief's decision was legal and he had full rights to print the cartoons. But that does not exclude him from the responsibility he has towards his community: a community that reads the *DI*, and lets it be a part of their daily lives."

What Sabir and campus associations euphemistically called "responsibility" is in fact the greatest threat to free speech in our present

society. There is indeed a distinction between responsible and irresponsible use of freedom. The press has a constitutional and legal right to publish uncouth obscenity, but that does not necessarily mean that the decision to do so is moral. Critics such as Sabir associate the cartoons with precisely this kind of irresponsibility. What they refuse to consider is the fact that the cartoons are accurate representations of many adherents of Islam. What more proof do Americans need than the images of Muslims burning down the Danish embassy, killing innocent victims, and publicly chanting death threats to America and her supporters? Truth is "offensive" only to those who refuse to accept it because of their blind adherence to mystical doctrine. Because it is the primary responsibility of journalists to report the truth, it would be irresponsible *not* to publish them.

Regrettably, views antagonistic to free speech are common in intellectual circles. A *Daily Californian* interview with political science lecturer Darren Zook revealed his sentiment that "Journalists have a right to publish political cartoons...There should, however, be self-censorship, not out of fear, but out of cultural sensitivity."

In a panel discussion at UCLA, Khaleel Mohammed, assistant professor of religion at San Diego State University, made clear that free speech is subordinate to religion: "If this is your idea of freedom, if you take the religious values of 1.4 billion people and demonize them, we don't call that freedom. We don't want that freedom."

Zook and Mohammed candidly support self-censorship, the notion that the right to think and express one's ideas freely is subordinate to the sensitivities of the offended party. It is ultimately the sacrifice of one's autonomous mind to the irrational demands of another. But just as man is not the slave of his brother, a publication is not the slave of its readership. This does not mean that a newspaper should publish anything and everything. The press can *voluntarily* choose not to publicize something, but the decision to do so or not should remain insensitive to the emotional demands of the public. If a reader finds something offensive, he has the option to avert his eyes.

Sadly, those responsible for educating the new generation try to justify self-censorship

on the grounds that it is beneficial to learning. Professor Mobin Shorish, who was present at the U of I rally, articulated his views in a *DI* article. He claimed that "the cartoons go against the mission of the University" because "good learning cannot take place in a hostile environment."

In essence, Shorish expresses the view that political correctness fosters a prosperous learning environment. But does "good learning" require students to surrender their reasoning minds and their right to freely express their thoughts in order to appease those potentially offended? Can a student learn the difference between right and wrong by holding the view that all cultures and ideologies merit equal treatment? How will Americans hold their heads up high and denounce their enemies if they are taught to tolerate everything and anything? Ideas such as those championed by Shorish have one purpose: to thwart the very process a University is meant to promote.

Other newspapers refused to follow the *DI*'s example. *The Harvard Crimson* justified their refusal to reprint on the grounds that it "would neither further inform the public nor the debate." Similarly, the *Chicago Maroon* editorial board determined that reprinting was not necessary to fulfill their "primary responsibility...to provide news that adds to [their] community's discourse." What these commentators fail to realize is that the main purpose of free speech is to defend an individual's right to express his thoughts independent of another's desire to discuss them with him.

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press his thoughts independent of another's desire to discuss them with him. Yet discourse cannot arise under the muzzle of a gun—one can only support the beleaguered Danish cartoonists, not attempt to initiate "discourse" with the thugs who terrorize them. Nor can rational discussion take place

in an environment that subordinates an individual's independent judgment to the "feelings" of those who follow religious doctrine.

Offended students at the U of I participated in a peaceful demonstration against the cartoons. Many described them as blatant manifestations of hatred and racism. Fortunately, protesters did not go unchallenged. Two students rallied in front of the protesters while holding enlarged reproductions of the Muhammad cartoons for all to see. In his *DI* column, Jeff Myczek challenged the reasoning behind the Quad demonstration. He addressed the protesters directly: "If it is the negative

# The Moral Goodness of the Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima

Demanding unconditional surrender forces an enemy to abandon the Morality of Death.

by John Lewis



On August 6, 1945 the American Air Force incinerated Hiroshima, Japan with an atomic bomb. On August 9, Nagasaki was obliterated. The fireballs killed some 175,000 people. They followed months of horror, when American airplanes firebombed civilians and reduced cities to rubble. Facing extermination, the Japanese surrendered unconditionally. The invasion of Japan was cancelled, and countless American lives were saved. The Japanese accepted military occupation, embraced a constitutional government, and renounced war permanently. The effects were so beneficent, so wide-ranging and so long-term, that the bombings must be ranked among the most moral acts ever committed.

The bombings have been called many things—but *moral*? The purpose of morality, wrote Ayn Rand, is not to suffer and die, but to prosper and live. How can death on such a scale be considered *moral*?

The answer begins with Japanese culture. World War II in the Pacific was launched by a nation that esteemed everything hostile to human life. Japan's religious-political philosophy held the emperor as a god, subordinated the individual to the state, elevated ritual over rational thought, and adopted suicide as a path to honor. This was truly a Morality of Death, which had gripped Japanese society for nearly three generations. Japan's war with Russia had ended in 1905 with a negotiated treaty, which left Japan's militaristic culture intact. The motivations for war were emboldened, and the next generation broke the treaty by attacking Manchuria in 1931 (which was not caused by the oil embargo of 1941).

It was after Japan attacked America that America waged war against Japan—a proper moral response to the violence Japan had initiated. Despite three and a half years of slaughter, surrender was not at hand in mid-1945. Over six million Japanese were still in Asia. Some 12,000 Americans had died on Okinawa alone. Many Japanese leaders hoped to kill enough Americans during an invasion to convince them that the cost of invasion was too high. A “Die for the Emperor” propaganda campaign had motivated many Japanese civilians to fight to the death. Volunteers lined up

for *kamikaze*—“Divine Wind”—suicide missions. Hope of victory kept the Japanese cause alive, until hopeless prostration before American air attacks made the abject renunciation of all war the only alternative to suicide. The Japanese had to choose between the Morality of Death, and the Morality of Life.

The bombings marked America's total victory over a militaristic *culture* that had murdered millions. To return an entire nation to morality, the Japanese had to be shown the literal meaning of the war they had waged against others. The abstraction “war,” the propaganda of their leaders, their twisted samurai “honor,” their desire to die for the emperor—all of it had to be given concrete form. This is what firebombing Japanese cities accomplished. It showed the Japanese that “*this*”—point to burning buildings, screaming children scarred unmercifully, piles of corpses,

**Only total defeat could force Japan and Germany to re-think their place in the world and offer their children something better.**

the promise of starvation—“*this* is what you have done to others. Now it has come for you. Give it up, or die.” This was the only way to show them the true nature of their philosophy, and to beat the truth of the defeat into them.

Yes, Japan was beaten in July of 1945—but had not surrendered. A *defeat* is a fact; an aggressor's ability to win is destroyed. *Surrender* is a decision, by the political leadership and the dominant voices in the culture, to recognize the fact of defeat. Surrender is an admission of impotence, the collapse of all hope for victory, and the permanent renunciation of aggression. Such recognition of reality is the first step towards a return to morality. Under the shock of defeat, a stunned silence results. Military officers no longer plan for victory; women no longer bear children for the Reich; young boys no longer play samurai and dream of dying for the emperor.

To achieve this, the victor must be intransigent. He does not accept terms; he demands prostrate surrender, or death, for everyone if necessary. Had the United States negotiated in 1945, Japanese troops would have returned to a homeland free of foreign control, met by civilians who had not confronted defeat, under the same leaders who had taken them to war. A negotiated peace would have failed to discredit the ideology of war, and would have left the motivations for the next war intact. We

might have fought the Japanese Empire again, twenty years later. Fortunately, the Americans were in no mind to compromise.

President Truman demonstrated his willingness to bomb the Japanese out of existence if they did not surrender. The Potsdam Declaration of July 26, 1945 is stark: “The result of the futile and senseless German resistance to the might of the aroused free peoples of the world stands forth in awful clarity as an example to the people of Japan . . . Following are our terms. We will not deviate from them. There are no alternatives. We shall brook no delay . . . We call upon the government of Japan to proclaim now the unconditional surrender of all Japanese armed forces . . . The alternative for Japan is prompt and utter destruction.”

The approach worked brilliantly. After the bombs, the Japanese chose wisely. The method was brutally violent, as it had to be—because the war unleashed by Japan was brutally violent, and only a brutal action could demonstrate its nature. To have shielded Japanese citizens from the meaning of their own actions—the Rape of Nanking and the Bataan Death March—would have been a massive act of dishonesty. It would have left the Japanese unable to reject military aggression the next time it was offered as an elixir of glory. After the war, many returning Japanese troops were welcomed by their countrymen not as heroes, but with derision. The imperial cause was recognized as bankrupt, and the actions of its soldiers worthy of contempt. Forced to confront the reality of what they had done, a sense of morality had returned to Japan.

There can be no higher moral action by a nation than to destroy an aggressive dictatorship, to permanently discredit the enemy's ideology, to stand guard while a replacement is crafted, and then to greet new friends on proper terms. Let those who today march for peace in Germany and Japan admit that their grandparents once marched as passionately for war, and that only total defeat could force them to re-think their place in the world and offer their children something better. Let them thank heaven—the United States—for the bomb.

Some did just that. Hisatsune Sakomizu, chief cabinet secretary of Japan, said after the war: “The atomic bomb was a golden opportunity given by Heaven for Japan to end the war.” He wanted to look like a peaceful man—which became a sensible position only after the Americans had won. Okura Kimmochi, president of the Technological Research Mobilization Office, wrote before the surrender: “I think

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# A Businessman Stands for Principle and Property Rights

John Allison of BB&T Bank speaks—and acts—against eminent domain.

by Ray Girn



According to Objectivism, the principle of property rights is a cornerstone of a free society. The right to property is the recognition that human life requires material goods, and that an individual has ownership over the goods he produces.

The principle of property, once accepted ubiquitously in this country, has been under attack for over a century. The expansion of “eminent domain” is one example.

Eminent domain is the government’s legal power to confiscate private property for “public use.” Traditionally, it was limited to the replacement of homes and farms with highways, power plants, airports. In the past few decades, however, it has grown to include the seizure of homes for the sake of private development projects: condominiums and shopping centers

Last June, in a historic expansion of eminent domain, the Supreme Court ruled that the government’s power of eminent domain includes the power to force a private party to transfer property to another private party in any case where such a transfer increases local taxes. *Suzette Kelo*, a nurse, was ordered to give up her lovingly-restored home to private developers because the municipal government wanted the extra tax revenue.

The history of eminent domain shows the process by which a principle, abandoned in theory, gradually disappears in practice. Historically, the defenders of property did not defend property as a political principle. They granted the idea that property is owned only by government permission, and then argued only that it was usually not in the “public interest” for the government to revoke such permission.

This pragmatic, anti-principle strategy failed to work. The exercise of eminent domain has grown and grown. As Justice Sandra Day O’Connor wrote in her *Kelo* dissent, “The specter of condemnation hangs over all property. Nothing is to prevent the State from replacing any Motel 6 with a Ritz-Carlton,

any home with a shopping mall, or any farm with a factory.”

Two intellectual elements are necessary to stop eminent domain: a defense of property rights, and a defense of the need for moral and legal principles. The philosophy of Objectivism makes possible this dual defense. Intellectuals and businessmen influenced by Objectivism are taking up the cause.

Among businessmen, there is no greater champion of the principle of property rights—and of the deeper principles underlying them—than John Allison, CEO of BB&T, the 9th largest U.S. bank. After *Kelo*, Mr. Allison announced that his company would refuse loans to developers that made use of eminent domain. In the following interview with *The Undercurrent*, Mr. Allison discusses his company’s new policy.

**The Undercurrent:** Thank you, Mr. Allison, for your time. Your company has adopted a policy of refusing loans to companies using eminent domain. Why?

**John Allison:** We were facing some practical decisions about whether we would finance projects where eminent domain was being used to benefit one individual at the expense of another individual. We decided we wouldn’t do those kinds of projects. It wasn’t consistent with our values.

**TU:** Why not? What is wrong with the use of eminent domain?

**JA:** It basically assumes that the public

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**“Kelo is a major change in the standard by which eminent domain can be executed...with Kelo, any city council can take anybody’s property if they think it will raise taxes. That’s a really low standard, and a scary standard.”**

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good, no matter how that happens to arbitrarily be defined, overwhelms individual rights. In fact the public good is an invalid concept. We teach our employees in our dealings with the public in our branches that there is no such thing as “the public.” There’s only concrete individuals—there’s only Tom Brown, Suzy Jones, and Fred Smith. When the “public good” starts to prevail, what is really means is “good for them and bad for you.” That’s what’s really going on here.

Consider urban renewal. Many people would say urban renewal is successful because it “eliminates blighted neighborhoods.” Well, it’s successful for those who bulldoze the town, but if you look at what actually happened, to low income [families] and minorities in particular, from the use of eminent domain for urban renewal, it’s a disaster. It destroyed many families.

**TU:** Refusing loans to companies seems to mean refusing potential profits. Do you worry that such a moral stance may harm your business?

**JA:** We have always been a principle-driven business. We believe that acting consistently with our principles is to our long-term benefit even if at times there may seem to be short-term consequences.

**TU:** What has been the response of your shareholders, and of the general public, to your announcement of this new policy?

**JA:** Though we hadn’t really expected a big public reaction, we have received thousands of phone calls, emails, letters, from individuals, from businesses, even from government officials, in support of our policy on eminent domain. People have pretty strong feelings about [this issue]. I think there’s been a positive response both on our eminent domain stance and that we, a large business, would act on principle.

**TU:** Do you think that the *Kelo* decision set up the positive response to your policy?

**JA:** Yes. I think that people realize that *Kelo* is a major change in the standard by which eminent domain can be executed. In the past the theory was that eminent domain would be used for truly public projects. Clearly, with *Kelo*, any city council can take anybody’s property if they think it will raise taxes. That is really a low standard, and a scary standard.

**TU:** BB&T has been active in supporting philosophical scholarship into the nature of capitalism. How do you expect this to pay dividends for your company?

**JA:** If you look at the regulatory cost that’s imposed on the banking industry and on business in general, it’s huge. In fact, I think people would be startled how big it is. The reason such regulation exists is that while many people realize that capitalism produces a lot of improvement in the standard of living, most people perceive capitalism to be either amoral at

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# Don't Be Evil, Google

Google's concessions to Chinese censors undermine freedom—and Google's long-term profits.

by Gena Gorlin



In launching Google.cn on January 25th, the beloved search engine caved in to the Chinese government's demand that it block politically "sensitive" content from searches. Now, if a Chinese web surfer wants to learn, for instance, about the 1989 massacre at Tiananmen Square, he will find 13,600 pages of government-sanctioned myths—with 1,566,400 pages, those containing the politically dangerous truth, omitted.

Critics have expressed disappointment

at what they view as the company's blatant breach of principles. "Don't be evil," Google's company motto, is now chanted by many of Google's opponents, who decry its "profit-driven" collusion with a deprived, freedom-squelching regime.

But the critics get it backwards. The evil of Google.cn will not garner a large profit for Google; it will *undercut* the company's profit-making capacity, in the long run.

To see that, one need only study the story of Google's success. A decade after its birth, the Google brand has morphed into a common household verb. We no longer search for information; we *google* it. Unlike other search engines, whose confusing and inefficiently sorted search results were often met with resentment by weary users, Google has earned the loving trust of its customers. Like a close friend, it stands by to answer our burning questions on every subject, quickly,

simply, reliably.

Google's founders attempt to explain the unique aura of trust hovering over their company's brand by brandishing their "Don't be evil" motto. According to Google's "Philosophy page," this refers primarily to Google's policy of not "biasing" search results with irrelevant paid ads or bombarding its users with cumbersome pop-ups. Allegedly, Google resists the temptation to "do evil," unlike other IT companies, by refusing to put profits above service to its users.

In reality, however, Google's search methodology distinguishes Google not because it is less "evil," but because it is a more *effective business model*—given that Google's product is information, and a separation of ads from search content is the most effective way to ensure that users can instantly access the information they are looking for.

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## Domestic Security Secures Our Demise

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guide his use of power: Should his powers to protect our security be open-ended, or should they be restricted? If restricted, restricted by what principle? This question needs to be answered to settle any of the ongoing post-9/11 debates about the proper use of the homeland security department, the Patriot Act, immigration restrictions, border security, airport security, cockpit security, intelligence reform, etc.

Furthermore, while it is important to define the president's proper powers concerning domestic security, it is even more important to realize that domestic security measures are *not* our best means of securing our freedom against foreign terrorists. What is needed is a foreign policy that aggressively pursues them and their state-sponsors.

In practice, the strategy of securing our freedom with domestic security has led to an unprecedented growth in the state's policing powers. The president enjoys the freedom to grant warrantless wiretaps, to use secret military tribunals with lower standards of

proof to try suspects of his own choosing, to indefinitely detain immigrants, and to limit intelligence briefings to Congress by exercising greater secrecy. With the recent renewal of the Patriot Act, law enforcement agencies will continue to enjoy the freedom to conduct espionage with impunity and to conduct secret, essentially warrantless records searches, physical searches, and many other things.

The president often justifies his powers by citing the Congressional authorization given to him on September 18th, 2001 authorizing the president to "use all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001." Furthermore, the Patriot Act authorizes the FBI to engage in certain investigative activities provided that they are "for purposes of protecting against terrorism."

Many have raised concerns over the threat these new law-enforcement powers pose to the very freedom they are intended to secure. Some of these concerns are not legitimate, but some are. The legitimate concerns demonstrate that, in the long-run, no amount of police-state power

will prove adequate for preserving our freedom.

Some fear that these police-state powers unjustifiably infringe on our civil liberties. Posing as defenders of freedom, these critics confound civil liberties with fundamental rights, demanding that civil liberties be preserved at all cost. But civil liberties are derivatives of fundamental rights—they are not fundamental themselves.

Take trial by jury as an example. The principle underlying trial by jury is procedural: because man has a fundamental right to life and liberty, the state cannot punish him for a crime until objective evidence of his crime has been

**Domestic security measures are *not* our best means of securing our freedom against foreign terrorists.**

identified. This is because under normal, peacetime circumstances, trial by jury improves the chances that a suspect's fate will be reviewed by at least one objective observer. Under normal circumstances, high standards of evidence are required because it is worse to punish an innocent man than to fail to punish a guilty one.

In order for the state to be able to implement these procedures, it must have the time to find people who are able to be jurists, the time to collect high levels of evidence, the time to present every shred of relevant evidence in trial, etc. In a time of war, however,

such extensive procedures become a threat to the freedom they are meant to uphold in a time of peace. When the loss of a single second of time could result in the loss of many lives, governmental actions *must* be expedited, for the sake of protecting the fundamental rights to life and liberty that civil rights are designed to protect. This same consideration justified warrantless searches and wiretaps, secret trials, and any number of emergency powers—provided that these powers are temporary and their purpose is clearly defined.

But are the president's current powers temporary or delimited to a clearly defined purpose? The answer is "no," and it is here that critics of the president raise a legitimate concern.

The president's powers allegedly deriving from the September 18th, 2001 resolution exist "in order to prevent *any future acts of international terrorism against the United States.*" It does not specify which terrorists must be stopped or how many of them must be stopped until their threat has been removed with satisfaction. In essence, it leaves open the possibility of an open-ended, ongoing "War on Terrorism," motivated by little more than the potential for attacks. Without a clear objective, the "War on Terrorism" will become permanent and the

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# World Peace Requires World Freedom

Statist government—not poverty or weaponry—is the greatest threat to peace.

by *Audra Hilse*



If your college campus is anything like mine, there are probably at least a few posters around declaring the evils of war and exhorting everyone to work for “world peace.”

It’s not a new call. For centuries, people have worked and prayed for world peace, but it hasn’t happened yet. Why has this goal never been achieved in spite of everything that people have tried to do to reach it?

The problem lies in the fact that no one

has yet properly identified the true causes of war. Many supposed “causes” of war have been put forward over the years, such as poverty or military strength. But each of these theories identifies the wrong cause, with the result that the solutions people have attempted have not solved the problem and have sometimes even exacerbated it.

The old Marxist/socialist theory was that rich, capitalist nations started wars to gain control of more wealth and trade opportunities. This theory has since been discredited. Wealth is not based solely on controlling vast tracks of land or natural resources, as was thought before the Industrial Revolution. Resources are a necessary condition for wealth, not its cause. Wealth comes from thought, innovation based on science, capital investment, and entrepreneurial production. Going to war to gain political control over resources is counter-productive; it may

procure resources, but it destroys wealth. This has been made clearer over the years. Japan, for example, went to war to gain more resources in World War II, and ended up losing everything. Since then, they have completely sworn off any use of military force, and have become an economic success.

With their old theory discredited, the Marxists needed a new explanation—hence the more recent theory that not wealth but poverty causes wars: the rich countries of the world exploit poorer nations economically and then the poorer nations rise up in protest. But this theory is also incorrect: a nation’s control of resources *per se* is not the underlying cause of war.

Some resource-poor countries, such as many nations in Africa or North Korea at the end of World War II, have gone to war over resources. In these cases, statist governments—systems

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## Death to “Diplomacy” with Iran

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The proposed deal—which was said to include the sale of civilian aircraft and membership for Iran in the World Trade Organization—rested on the notion that no one would put abstract goals or principles ahead of gaining a steady flow of economic loot. And so, if only we could have negotiated a deal that gave Iran a sufficiently juicy carrot, it would forgo its ambitions.

But to believe that Iran really hungers for nuclear energy (as it claims) is sheer fantasy. Possessing abundant oil and gas reserves, Iran is the second-largest oil producer in OPEC. To believe that it values prosperity at all is equally fantastic; Iran is a theocracy that systematically violates its citizens’ right to political and economic liberty.

What Iran desires is a nuclear weapon—the better to threaten and annihilate the impious in the West and in Iran’s neighborhood. Iran declares its anti-Western ambitions stridently. At an official parade in 2004, Iran flaunted a missile draped with a banner declaring that: “We will crush America under our feet.” (Its leaders, moreover, have for years

repeated the demand that “Israel must be wiped off the map.”)

A committed enemy of the West, Iran is the ideological well-spring of Islamic terrorism, and the “world’s most active sponsor of terrorism” (according to the U.S. government). A totalitarian regime that viciously punishes “un-Islamic” behavior among its own citizens, Iran actively exports its contempt for freedom and human life throughout the infidel world. For years it has been fomenting and underwriting savage attacks on Western and American interests, using such proxies as Hezbollah. Like several of the 9/11 hijackers before them, many senior Al Qaida leaders, fugitives of the Afghanistan war, have found refuge in Iran. And lately Iran has funneled millions of dollars, arms and ammunition to insurgents in Iraq.

It’s absurd to think that by offering Iran rewards to halt its aggression, we will deflect it from its goal.

The only consequence of engaging such a vociferously hostile regime in negotiations is the whitewashing of its crimes and the granting of undeserved legitimacy. The attempt to conciliate Iran has further inflamed the boldness of Iran’s mullahs. What it has taught them is that the West lacks the intellectual self-confi-

dence to name its enemies and deal with them accordingly. It has vindicated the mullahs’ view that their religious worldview can bring a scientific, technologically advanced West to its knees.

Whether or not negotiations yield a deal, “diplomacy” abets Iran. The deal would have sustained Iran’s economy, propped up its dictatorial government and perpetuate its terrorist war against the West. But even without a deal, simply by prolonging “negotiations,” Iran grows stronger because it gains time to continue covert nuclear-weapons research.

This approach of diplomacy-with-anyone-at-any-cost necessarily results in nourishing one’s enemy and sharpening its fangs. That is what happened under a 1994 deal with communist North Korea. After endless negotiations and offers of aid, North Korea promised not to develop nuclear weapons. When the North was caught cheating on its pledge, the West pursued yet more negotiations, and the North eventually promised anew to end its nuclear program. In February 2005 North Korea declared (plausibly) that it had succeeded in building nuclear weapons.

Another, older attempt to negotiate with an avowed enemy

was a cataclysmic failure. In 1938 the Europeans pretended that Hitler’s intentions were not really hostile, and insisted that “peace in our time” could be brokered diplomatically (by letting him take Czechoslovakia). The negotiations afforded him time to build his military machine and emboldened him to launch World War II.

Ignoring the lessons of history, the Europeans embarked on negotiations with Iran that likewise sought the reckless pretence of peace today, at the cost of unleashing catastrophic dangers tomorrow.

To protect American (and European) lives, we must learn the life-or-death importance of passing objective moral judgment. By any rational standard, Iran should be condemned and its nuclear ambition thwarted, now. The brazenly amoral European gambit has only aided its quest—and will entail a future confrontation with a bolder, stronger Iran.

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## The Morality of Hiroshima

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it is better for our country to suffer a total defeat than to win total victory . . . in the case of Japan's total defeat, the armed forces would be abolished, but the Japanese people will rise to the occasion during the next several decades to reform themselves into a truly splendid people . . . the great humiliation [the bomb] is nothing but an admonition administered by Heaven to our country." But let him thank the American people—not heaven—for it was they who

made the choice between the Morality of Life and the Morality of Death inescapable.

Americans should be immensely proud of the bomb. It ended a war that had enslaved a continent to a religious-military ideology of slavery and death. There is no room on earth for this system, its ideas and its advocates. It took a country that values this world to bomb this system out of existence. For the Americans to do so while refusing to sacrifice their own troops to save the lives of enemy civilians was a sublimely moral action. They destroyed the foundations of the war, and allowed the Japanese to rebuild their culture along with their cities, as prosperous inhabitants of the earth. Were it true

that total victory today creates new attackers tomorrow, we would now be fighting Japanese suicide bombers, while North Korea—where the American army did not march—would be peaceful and prosperous. The facts are otherwise. The need for total victory over the Morality of Death has never been clearer.

*Dr. John Lewis is Assistant Professor of History at Ashland University. He has a PhD in Classics from the University of Cambridge, and has written for numerous academic and Objectivist publications. His book, Nothing Less than Victory: Military Offense and the Lessons of History, is forthcoming.*

## Cartoon Controversy on Campus

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

stereotype of Islam that you are trying to fight, why was there not a single poster condemning the acts of rampant Muslim mobs in the Middle East?"

*The Harvard Salient* raised similar questions when they republished four of the Danish cartoons, claiming that they would not "[cater] to a sensitivity borne of fear of death that has plagued many would-be critics of radical Islam." Below these were two "vile cartoons" representative of the kind published in "state-run newspapers throughout the Islamic Middle East." The juxtaposition is clear: while Islamic fundamentalists can and do pillory their enemies, they do not respect others' right to do the same.

Why don't Muslims denounce

the Arab cartoons? Likewise, why don't they protest the violence in Denmark? Their silence can be interpreted objectively to signify a tacit agreement with the critics of America and an implicit sanction of violence. As Dr. Wafa Sultan said in an interview published in *The New York Times*, Muslims "are hostages to [their] own beliefs and teachings." Muslims do not protest violence because freedom of speech does not exist within Islamic dogma. They do not believe in free speech, but in self-censorship—as Khaleel Mohammed himself makes clear.

Despite our enemies' persistent attacks on free speech, we have not lost the war. Unwavering defenders of free speech are starting to fight at the forefront in this battle between East and West. *The Undercurrent* recently published a special cartoon flyer that has been distributed at major universities, such as Columbia, Yale, and the University of Chicago.

The Ayn Rand Institute also launched "a campaign to bring the Danish cartoons to the widest possible audience—and to arrange a series of lectures to discuss the vital need to defend free speech." ARI has already participated in panel discussions at UCLA and Johns Hopkins University. LOGIC, the Objectivist group at UCLA, hosted a civilized discussion between four panelists that took place in front of an audience of approximately 180 people. The JHU Objectivist Club decided to sponsor the discussion after they distributed a poster showing a Muhammad cartoon and a stamp reading "I too am Spartacus." The club learned later that day that angry student groups had removed the posters without their consent.

The list of freedom fighters is not limited to the Objectivists. Other campus newspapers published the cartoons after the *Daily Illini* took the initiative. Among these are publications such as *Primary Source* at Tufts University,

the *Northern Star* at Northern Illinois University, and the *California Patriot* at UC Berkeley.

*Chicago Maroon* writer Teresa Mia Bejan realizes that now is not a time for toleration: "To advocate censorship and issue apologies... sends a message to the world that the free press is somehow responsible for these atrocities, not the radical imams who stir up hate, or the violent mobs who murder." For this reason, Americans must stand united in our battle to defend one of our most important founding principles: freedom of speech.

According to Hasan Ali, president of the Muslim Students' Association at the University of Chicago: "You don't fight fire with fire... You fight it with understanding." We at *The Undercurrent* offer an alternative: fight fire with reason.

*Kelly Cadenas is a second year undergraduate at Harvard University where she currently pursues a degree in biochemistry.*

## Domestic Security Secures Our Demise

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

president's emergency powers will become dictatorial.

Of more pressing concern, however, is that any genuine threat these new police-state powers pose to our freedom pales in comparison to the danger of relying on such powers for the preservation of our freedom from foreign threats.

Consider what the guaranteed long-term success of such a policy requires. In a world where there are major foreign governments such as those of Iran, Syria, and Saudi Arabia, supporting those who are plotting to circumvent these measures (to say nothing of Iran's attempt to acquire nuclear weapons), America is simply too big and too free for

police-state powers to prevent every possible attack. The state would have to have everyone wiretapped, check every single container that enters our ports, detain every single person at our borders, have cameras on every street corner, etc. The continuance of this policy, while foreign threats are allowed to exist, will most certainly fail to prevent all future attacks.

In order to end the threat of future attacks and to delimit the life and scope of new police-state powers, we must therefore demand a war declaration, not further open-ended law-enforcement measures. Rather than worrying about how and when we place individual terrorists on trial, Congress must place *regimes* who support terrorists "on trial," declare them to be enemies of the United States, and demand their unconditional surrender as the objective of war. At this point the proceedings would be a mere formality:

we are already in a *de facto* state of war with multiple regimes, so Congress has the duty to make it a *speedy* trial.

If we declare war, some emergency domestic security measures will be required. But we will have no legitimate reason to fear them, as long as they do not violate fundamental rights and as long as we know when the emergency will come to an end. Congressional critics of the president should realize that our Constitution gives them the power to rein in the president through a war declaration. Thus, if we are to protect our liberty from an unlimited, ever-encroaching police-state—and from foreign enemies who would impose their own police state on us—nothing short of a clear, confident declaration of war will suffice.

*Felipe Sediles is a Ph.D. student in aerospace engineering at Syracuse University.*

# The Backward Strategy of Democracy

Individual rights—not elections—are the key to a foreign policy of freedom.

by Rebecca Knapp



This January, the Islamic terrorist organization, Hamas, won the Palestinian elections by a landslide. It now effectively controls Parliament. President Bush responded to the election by complimenting the democratic process. “You see,” he said, in a line quoted by *Time Online*, “When you give people the vote, give them the chance to express themselves at the polls and they’re unhappy with the status quo, they’ll let you know...I like the competition of ideas. I like people who have to go out and say, vote for me, and here’s what I’m going to do. There’s something healthy about a system that does that.”

There is nothing healthy about Hamas. Since 1989, Hamas has orchestrated knife attacks, shootings, kidnappings, and suicide bombings against the Israeli populace. In 2002, they killed 30 and wounded 140 more when they bombed a hotel in Netanya. Their covenant reads like the street-corner rantings of a religious maniac, or a verse from the Old Testament. To quote just a few lines: “The hour of judgment shall not come until the Muslims fight the Jews and kill them, so that the Jews hide behind trees and stones, and each tree and stone will say: ‘Oh Muslim, oh servant of Allah, there is a Jew behind me, come and kill him.’”

In case the world thought Hamas might soften its policies on assuming power, Hamas Political Bureau head Khaled Mash’al disabused us of that fantasy on Al-Jazeera televi-

sion a month after the elections. He declared that the election victory had instilled Hamas with strength. With its new position of power, Hamas would force the world to “respect” it.

The grave implications of the Palestinian elections cannot be overlooked simply because those elections were democratic. The elections illustrate democracy’s *harms*—that is, the harms of a system that subordinates individual rights to majority whims. Democracy is a system of oppression: an Athenian majority can vote to put Socrates to death for his crime of teaching Athenian youths to think. A German majority can elect a racist dictator who promises to purge the nation of Jews. An Afghani majority can sentence Christian convert Abdul Rahman to death, for rejecting Islam. An Iraqi majority can ratify a constitution that institutionalizes Islam as the standard for justice. Democracies can vote to silence free speech, to enslave minority populations, to murder political dissidents. Democracy is the end of freedom.

The political system that truly implements freedom is one that protects individual rights. America is such a system. America was founded, not as a democracy, but as a constitutional *republic*: a representative government that writes its laws in accordance with the life, liberty and property of its citizens, not public caprice.

President Bush bases his foreign policy on his stated desire to spread freedom to foreign nations. From his 2006 State of the Union address: “Abroad, our nation is committed to a historic, long-term goal - we seek the end of tyranny in our world...Every step toward freedom in the world makes our country safer, and so we will act boldly in freedom’s cause.”

Even by his own standard, Bush has failed. He has betrayed his mission to spread freedom abroad. This is not because of the reason that liberals cite: that Bush has disrespected Iraqi culture. It is because Bush needed to

eradicate that culture, and replace it with one that values freedom. Instead, he has allowed the majority to determine the shape of Iraqi government. The majority has ratified a constitution that institutionalizes religion and religious oppression. Bush has sold out freedom in Iraq—in the name of democracy.

Bush’s approach in Iraq reflects the idea that democracy, implemented by free elections, is identical to freedom. This isn’t so. A free election simply serves to establish whatever system the majority prefers. In Iraq, as in Palestine, the system the majority prefers is a theocracy.

If America is going to spend resources on a war in Iraq, and if it is going to concern itself with the future of the country it has defeated, it would better guide its actions by the truth that the protection of rights is the basis of a free society.

In Iraq’s case, this should mean writing a rights-based constitution, and mandating that it be followed. The Iraqi culture is not friendly enough toward free government for any other method to be successful.

In a country that is friendlier towards freedom, and has a better understanding of the rights-protection that it requires, encouraging elections may in fact be the best means of encouraging freedom. This may, for example, be the best strategy in the Ukraine, Belarus, and other Eastern European countries. Elections are part of a free society—just not the essential part.

For an election to promote freedom, the candidates must fundamentally agree on the nature of free government, though they disagree on implementation. That requires a society in which the nature of freedom is widely understood and valued. Ultimately, it is philosophy that protects a free society, namely the philosophical belief

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## John Allison on Eminent Domain

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best, but typically immoral, so they think it’s necessary to have all these government rules and regulations in order to reign in capitalism.

We continue to support things like United Way, which are traditional charities that banks have supported. But we’ve started focusing more and

more contributions on the moral foundations of capitalism. I believe that our support for the moral foundations of capitalism is probably the *most* important contribution we make from a share-holder perspective. And it’s a small cost relative to the huge regulatory burden that is imposed on our company.

**TU:** As a successful businessman, what advice would you give to a college student who wishes to understand the key to success in business?

**JA:** The key to success in business is having the right

principles. And the number one principle is to make rational decisions based on the facts. Successful businesspeople don’t necessarily have higher IQs. It’s good to have a high IQ, but what really creates advantages for successful business people is that they face reality and make more rational decisions.

Once you get the principles right, it doesn’t guarantee success in the rest, but if you don’t get the principles right you don’t have a chance for success in the rest of your life. Your readers interested in BB&T’s corporate

principles can read about them on our website ([bbt.com/bbt/about/philosophy/values.html](http://bbt.com/bbt/about/philosophy/values.html)).

And of course in this regard my favorite book, and the book I would certainly recommend to any student, is *Atlas Shrugged*.

**TU:** Thank you, Mr. Allison, for your time. You are an inspiration.

**JA:** Thank you.

*Ray Girn is a graduate of the University of Toronto, and now teaches math and science at a private elementary school in Orange County, CA.*

# The Roots of the Hamas Victory

Palestinian terrorists want to destroy Israel, not to escape oppression.

by *Corinne L. Bloch*



Last January, Hamas won an overwhelming majority in parliamentary elections for the Palestinian Authority. The victory of this terrorist organization, whose explicit goal is to wipe Israel off the map, has shocked the world. Why are the leaders of the Western world so surprised by this development? Why did Hamas win, despite the predictions of all the experts?

The leaders of the Western world are surprised because Israel has gone to great lengths to pacify the Palestinians, withdrawing from Gaza and surrendering control of the area over to the Palestinians. Israeli leaders expected the Palestinians to respond to this withdrawal by ceasing their terror attacks against Israel.

The assumption underlying this policy of appeasement was that the Arabs living in Gaza and the West Bank merely desire independence from Israel, and that terror is just their way of pressuring Israel to pull its army out of these territories. The Israeli occupation, it is said, has made life very difficult for the Palestinians. Israeli soldiers continuously patrol the area and Palestinians have to go through lengthy security checks when they travel. Once Israel pulls the settlers and soldiers out of the territories, the Palestinians will be able to achieve independence and will have no reason to continue terrorist acts.

However, Israel's policy of appeasement failed miserably. Instead of pacifying the Palestinians, the withdrawal from Gaza has only strengthened their aggressiveness towards Israel.

Immediately following the withdrawal, Hamas launched a public celebration of its "victory over Israel." Claiming that their attacks drove the Zionist enemy out of Gaza, Hamas distributed posters exhorting more Arabs to support their organization and join their ranks. Its leaders declared that they would respond to this retreat by expanding their war against Israel.

Over the months since then, Hamas has consolidated control over the Gaza Strip. Thousands of new recruits have flocked to its green banners. Hamas has armed its vast terrorist army by smuggling weapons into Gaza from Egypt through the Rafah border crossing—which Israel opened as a peace offering to the Palestinian Authority. Fugitive terrorists have found asylum in the Strip,

along with specialists on terrorism and missile technology sent by Iran, the group's primary source of funding. This strengthening of Hamas led, ultimately, to its victory in the elections. Israel's retreat from Gaza has given Hamas the power and the public support it needs to launch a third Intifada.

The appeasement policy has achieved the exact opposite of its intended results, because this policy was based on a mistaken premise. Contrary to the wishful thinking of Israeli leaders, Arab terrorists want a lot more than an end to the occupation.

The Arabs' terror-war against the Jews started in the 1920s, long before the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, let alone its occupation of Gaza and the West Bank in 1967. Israel occupied these territories in the Six Days War as a direct response to Arab aggression. Following the occupation, Israel enabled the free passage of Palestinians from the occupied territories to Israel. However, following the 1987 Intifada, Israel applied some restrictions on Palestinians' entry to Israel as a measure of self-defense, and

**The Gaza withdrawal has not only provided the terrorists with an immediate reward for their aggression, but has also emboldened them to continue fighting.**

these restrictions increased in direct proportion to continued acts of terror by Arabs. Similarly, the IDF actions in the territories are increased after each new wave of attacks on Israel. The difficulties of living under the occupation were entirely self-inflicted by the Palestinians, when they forced Israel to take these defensive measures. The Israeli occupation and the restrictions on Palestinians are the result—not the cause—of Palestinian terrorism.

By embracing Hamas, the Palestinian Arabs do not aim merely to drive Israel out of these territories and form their own state. While gaining control over as much of the land as possible is certainly one of their goals, their actions follow from a much deeper motive. The organization they have elected to lead them was established for the sole purpose of destroying Israel. Hamas leaders vow that they will not stop until this goal is accomplished. Suicide bombing is not only their immediate tool of getting more land; it is also the best weapon they currently have to kill as many Jews as possible.

Hamas's call for the annihilation of Israel is not some "extreme misinterpretation" of Islam. The Muslim religion requires the total submission of the individual's mind to God's will. It demands the regimentation of life under Islamic law. And the Koran com-

mands the death of those infidels who dare to resist.

Israel, in contrast, acknowledges the right of each individual to think and live for himself. Although a Jewish State, its secular system of government protects the rights of all citizens, regardless of creed or race. Israel is an island of reason, civilization and liberty within a sea of blind faith, primitivism and tyranny. The Muslim world hates Israel not in spite of its values, but because of them. The very existence of Israel is a reproach to Islam. Consequently, the Muslim world can settle for nothing less than Israel's destruction.

The Gaza withdrawal has not only provided the terrorists with an immediate reward for their aggression, but has also emboldened them to continue fighting for the total destruction of Israel. More appeasement will only encourage more terror, until the Israelis have nothing left to give.

Israel has the right to exist for the same reason that Muslims want to destroy it: because it protects the rights of its citizens—including its Arab citizens—to live freely and pursue their happiness. Instead of apologizing for its success and giving more power to its avowed enemies, Israel must assert its right to exist and defend itself.

The leading candidate for Prime Minister of Israel, Ehud Olmert, is planning to forge ahead with further withdrawals and concessions, planning to apply Sharon's policy of disengagement to the West Bank. Instead of continuing the appeasement policy by handing the West Bank over to Hamas, Israel must take a stand and fight back.

*Corinne Bloch has a B.Sc. and M.Sc. in biology. She is currently working on a Ph.D. in neurobiology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a Ph.D. in philosophy at Tel Aviv University.*

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## World Peace Requires World Freedom

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in which individual rights are cast aside in favor of state control—are in control of the countries' resources, and mismanage or destroy them, making it necessary to go looking for more resources elsewhere—usually in neighboring countries. Again, Japan during World War II is a good example.

But not all poor countries have gone down this road; South Korea and Taiwan (both very poor at the end of World War II) have *never* initiated war against their neighbors and have become quite wealthy. Their governments started out authoritarian but steadily became freer as time has passed. Resources are in the hands of the producers of wealth, individual citizens and businesses, and have been used well and to the advantage of everyone involved.

Whether a government is statist or not also makes a difference for how a country handles the resources it actually has. Look at the Soviet Union, another nation that was definitely not peaceful. Russia had vast amounts of material resources

of all kinds and the potential to be one of the wealthiest nations on the planet, yet its citizens spent nearly a century subsisting in horrific poverty because the Communist government mismanaged or destroyed the *human* resources—the entrepreneurs, scientists and investors—needed to take advantage of all of the natural resources. The pattern of external conflict follows here, too. The Soviet Union was involved in a direct war with Afghanistan for many years, and proxy wars elsewhere in the third world, such as China before World War II, North Korea and Vietnam.

The lack of possession of resources alone does not determine the peacefulness of a nation. The common thread that can be picked out from those countries that are aggressors is that it is always the *government* that is in control of the nation's resources.

The poverty theory isn't the only one proposed as the reason for warfare. What about those who advocate disarmament as a way to end wars? Whether it comes from the religious, "turn-the-other-cheek" view or from a more secular stance such as the anti-war protesters of the '60s and '70s, the pacifist movement has long claimed that the mere existence of military power breeds suspicion

and arms races between countries, which in turn lead to further conflict. For instance, they claim that if America would get rid of all its nuclear weapons, many if not all other countries with nuclear capabilities would no longer feel threatened and would abandon their nuclear weapons as well.

But merely "building weapons," of any kind, isn't what starts wars. Who is building the weapons, and why? Is it the Soviet Union, building up the biggest arsenal it can get so that it can retain control over its satellite states and conquer more territory whenever it needs more resources? Or is it the United States, pulled into an arms race by necessity to make sure that the aggressive communist powers were kept in check? If there hadn't been a Soviet Union (or other similar power) after the end of World War II, continued armament build-up would have been unnecessary, and America would have scaled her military back to a normal, peacetime level, as she began to do after the Soviet Union finally collapsed.

A statist government builds up arms with an eye to further conquest. A proper government builds up arms in self-defense—a policy which actually *prevents* wars. If the Soviet Union had genuinely thought it could defeat the United States, it would not have hesitated to declare war—it was not a love of peace that held them back. America and the Soviet Union never went to war because the Soviets knew that they could not win. The United States never declared war because it was never necessary for our defense; "peace through overwhelming firepower" actually works rather well, as long as the "overwhelming firepower" is in the hands of a proper, non-statist government.

So, if all of these proposed causes of war aren't the right answer, then what is? Looking at all these examples of which nations do start wars, historically, the correct answer is manifest: it is *statist* governments—governments that hold total control over the lives of their citizens and their country's resources—that start wars. It is the governments that rule by fear and brute force, as opposed to law, that begin wars. If the government can force its men into the military by draft, and can commandeer at will the productive efforts of its workers to produce war material, then what

is there to stop it from waging war whenever it feels like? Nothing.

Identification of statism as the cause of war makes it easy to identify the solution: freedom. If a nation's government is based on objective rule of law, then individual rights will be protected for all citizens. That means no draft (a violation of the right to life) and no commandeering resources (a violation of the right to own property). That means that the government will not be able to go to war without its citizens' consent, making wars not related to self-defense nearly impossible. A free people will volunteer to defend themselves and their freedoms, but they will not volunteer to fight a war that is unnecessary or has nothing to do with them. The people of a free, wealthy (industrialized) nation live much better when their country is at peace and they are free to produce and trade, both within their own nation and with other nations. War can only disrupt this.

History bears this out. When was the last time Britain and the United States, the two most consistently capitalistic countries, went to war against each other? 1812? They have fought in wars since then—wars against statist regimes like those of the Nazis, of militant Japan, of the Soviet Union, or of the Taliban and Saddam Hussein—but only in self-defense. They have *not* fought wars against other free, equally peaceful nations.

So, if free, capitalistic countries are only fighting wars against countries that threaten their freedom, then what would happen if all countries in the world were free and industrialized? All the incentives and need for war would disappear. Instead, we would have a world in which industrialized nations, upholding individual rights, would deal with each other on the basis of free trade, not armed conflict.

World peace is a wonderful goal to strive for. But much more than that—it's an achievable goal, as long as we learn where and how to start. Liberate the world and bring the Industrial Revolution to all nations, and there will be peace on earth.

*Audra Hilse is currently a sophomore at Lawrence University. She is studying history and minoring in Japanese. She likes to read and write fiction in her spare time.*

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## Don't Be Evil, Google

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Google's revolutionary search algorithm was designed to sort results along parameters that maximize the results' credibility and relevance to the user. Recognizing that their search formula is the most reliable, user-centered way of sorting information, the Google execs refused to tamper with it. Even when they could barely stay financially afloat in 1999, and investors pressured them to accept the then-popular advertising model promoted by Overture, Inc. (which provided ads masked as search results to Yahoo, AOL and others), Brin and Page refused—choosing to preserve the integrity of results generated by their algorithm.

Unfortunately, in their conception of paid ads and pop-ups as “evil,” Google's founders have failed to articulate the wider moral principle underlying their business genius: the *integrity* of remaining committed long-term to a standard they know is good. After inventing their new search method and trying it on the Stanford populace, Page and Brin identified a fact about their search engine: because it organized information usefully and reliably, seekers of information would come to prefer it; therefore, it would make money. With that fact in mind, Page and Brin had no trouble resisting “quick cash” temptations that would compromise the formula and ultimately breach users' trust—thereby curtailing Google's long-term profits. Yet they continued to decry the “evil” of “profit-hungry” tactics like ads and pop-ups, ignoring the fact that their method yielded a vastly larger profit, in the long-term, than Yahoo's or InfoSeek's pragmatic tinkering with search results.

If Google understood the moral principle that renders their long-term approach to business so successful, they would know the disastrous implications—and genuine *evil*—of fraternizing with China.

Consider, as just one projected effect, the consequences of Google.cn on Google's long-term business strategy: their adherence to the search formula that has set them apart since their inception. After years of refusing on principle to tamper with the algorithm, Google is

now smearing its basic methodology of user-oriented, “unbiased” search with the stark opposite: filtering of information according to political decree. Google's mission will now be divided between impartial dissemination of the truth and cosmetic manufacturing of lies. The Chinese customers Google is targeting so hungrily will now experience a lame, fragmented Google. It is not only the government that Chinese users will now distrust; it is Google, whose technicians and programmers will be in charge of excising forbidden information. Accordingly, Western users are already buzzing about Google's “sell-out” to the Chinese; for a brand that distinguishes itself as a “different kind of company,” Google stands to poison its reputation with this mealy-mouthed move.

If Google applied the same principled approach to its dealings in China that it has applied (up to now) to its search sorting, it would see that no long-term corporate strategy is possible in China—a country where government thugs can capriciously intrude into a corporation's affairs at any moment, for any reason.

If Google's owners thought in principles, they could have taken a lesson, for instance, from the recent Yukos scandal in the semi-dictatorship of Putin's Russia: when the ex-KGB President seized control of the giant oil company on a vicious impulse, throwing its CEO in prison, American investors lost millions of dollars in a single day.

By throwing its search engine to the winds of the Chinese government's political dictates, Google stands to lose not only the money it is investing in China, if the government should decide to shut down Google's headquarters, or seize its ad revenues; Google's presence in China may just as easily result in physical harm to both its own employees and to Chinese citizens whose private information the government can access with Google's help.

Lest you think this is mere ugly conjecturing: two years after Yahoo!'s venture into China, the company became so entangled in Communist bureaucracy that it facilitated the arrest of dissident journalist Shi Tao, by inadvertently divulging his e-mail address to the government. Instead of successfully “exploiting the Chinese market,” Yahoo! raised hell from the media and probably lost buy-

ers' confidence via the scandal; now Google, whose success is particularly contingent on its chaste reputation, stands to fall into the same pit.

Google invented and subsequently stayed loyal to its algorithm in order to achieve a certain long-term end: to “organize the world's information and make it universally accessible,” making billions of dollars on the value of that information. But when a company is not free to decide how to run its business, the long-term is an unknowable void that government bureaucrats can fill with any mish-mash of mandates and intrusions that they wish. This freedom-squelching power—not pop-ups or flashy ads—is *true evil*.

In fact, a company can act morally only by exercising integrity: by adhering to a policy that furthers its long-term purpose. An internet company has every right to organize its search results according to relevance or according to ad revenues or any other way that serves its purpose; the prerequisite, however, is precisely that they have a *right* to do it. Because Google has risen to flourish in a free Western society, it was able to adhere to its principle of relevance-based information without hindrance from parties who disagree with them. In China, Google has surrendered that right. Now they are impotent to uphold any professional principle, as capricious Chinese tyrants always stand poised to thwart it.

If Google understood the power of moral integrity, it would uphold its right to disperse its product—information—without restraint. And it might realize how much *greater* a benefit could be garnered, in the long run, by launching an *information* campaign: by, indeed, *bombarding* its users with large banners, company-sponsored statements, and press releases proclaiming the evil of China's regime. Google wields an unrivalled power to disseminate information fast and far. If Google employed that power to uphold *freedom* rather than bolster dictatorship, the world would listen. Then Google might come to symbolize a *truly* idealistic and reputable company to its customers.

*Gena Gorlin is a sophomore enrolled at Tufts University and the New England Conservatory.*

## Backward Strategy of Democracy

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

that the individual's life is inviolate, and that the actions he must take to preserve his life constitute the rights sanctified by government. Only when the philosophy of rights perme-

ates a culture will that culture be willing to preserve a system that protects rights in action.

The belief that the democratic will is sacrosanct prevents America from properly condemning Hamas' electoral success. With public will as the standard of good government, Hamas must be evaluated positively. But the idea that Americans should cheer when terrorists are elected to power is insane. It is the first sign

that something is wrong with the standard Bush has asked Americans to adopt.

America's policy of approving and *seeking* democratic elections, regardless of their results, has allowed Hamas that much more leeway in its jihad against Israel, and ultimately, against America. Hamas now has a country behind it. While the United Nations continues to bicker about whether to stop

sending its millions to Palestine, Hamas will continue to use those millions to undermine the peace and security of the West.

The more Bush spreads democracy, the more he threatens freedom—abroad and on American soil.

*Rebecca Knapp is a senior at the University of Chicago. She is studying classics and plans to attend law school.*

# SPEAKERS, EVENTS, MEETINGS

## University of Colorado (Boulder, CO)

**Announcement:** The Boulder Objectivist Club will hold regular meetings this semester.

**Further info:** Visit <http://www.colorado.edu/studentgroups/objectivists> or email Jim Manley ([j\\_manley@mac.com](mailto:j_manley@mac.com))

## University of Chicago (Chicago, IL)

**Announcement:** The Univ. of Chicago Objectivist Club will hold regular meetings this semester.

**Further info:** Visit <http://objectivist.uchicago.edu>, or email Rebecca Knapp ([rebkna@uchicago.edu](mailto:rebkna@uchicago.edu))

**What:** Panel Discussion on the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy

**Speaker:** Panelists to include Yaron Brook of the Ayn Rand Institute

**When:** April 25th, 6 PM  
**Where:** University of Chicago campus, location TBA

**Contact:** Rebecca Knapp ([rebkna@uchicago.edu](mailto:rebkna@uchicago.edu))

**Description:** Panelists will discuss the Muslim response to Muhammad cartoons published in European papers, the response of the American media, and the implications of the controversy for the freedom of speech. Further details TBA.

## Chicago Objectivist Society (Chicago, IL)

**What:** Two Lectures - Ayn Rand and the Virtue of Integrity and Working With Ayn Rand's Journals

**Speaker:** James Valliant, author of *The Passion of Ayn Rand's Critics*

**When:** Saturday, April 15th

**Where:** Downtown Chicago at the DePaul University Campus.

**Cost:** \$49 (\$39 full time students)

**Contact:** [contact@chicagoobjectivists.org](mailto:contact@chicagoobjectivists.org)

**Description:** James Val-

liant, the author of *The Passion of Ayn Rand's Critics*, is presenting two new lectures to the Chicago Objectivist Society. For the last twenty years, Ayn Rand has been the victim of attacks on her behavior and psychology inspired by the biographies of Nathaniel Branden and Barbara Branden. Finally, a critical response to the Branden's allegations has been published, *The Passion of Ayn Rand's Critics*, by James S. Valliant. In this two-part lecture, Mr. Valliant first examines the problems with the Branden's accounts. The second part of this lecture is a unique insight into Ayn Rand's character who has had access to her private journals.

## New York University (New York, NY)

**Announcement:** The NYU Objectivist Club will hold regular events this semester.

**Further info:** Visit <http://nyu.objectivismonline.net> or email [nyuoc-president@yahoo.com](mailto:nyuoc-president@yahoo.com)

## University of Southern California (Los Angeles, CA)

**What:** Panel: Unveiling the Danish Cartoons: A Discussion of Free Speech and World Response

**Panelists:** Dr. Yaron Brook, Dr. Daniel Pipes

**When:** April 11 2006, 7:30 pm - 10:30 pm

**Where:** Davidson Conference Center Embassy Room

**Contact:** USC Objectivist Club ([aynrand@usc.edu](mailto:aynrand@usc.edu))

**Description:** The Danish cartoons depicting Mohammed have sparked a worldwide controversy. Death threats and violent protests have sent the cartoonists into hiding and have had the intended effect of stifling freedom of expression. The reaction to these cartoons raises ur-

gent questions whose significance goes far beyond a set of drawings. What is freedom of speech? Does it include the right to offend? What is the significance of the worldwide Islamic reaction to the cartoons? How should Western governments have responded to this incident? How should the Western media have responded? These and related issues will be discussed by panelists from different backgrounds and perspectives. A questions-and-answers period with the audience will be included. Please note that the cartoons in question will be displayed at the event. Respect for the discussion forum will be strictly enforced.

**Further Info:** [www.uscobjectivistclub.com](http://www.uscobjectivistclub.com)

## University of Michigan (Ann Arbor, MI)

**What:** Public Lecture, "Religion vs. Morality"

**Speaker:** Dr. Andrew Bernstein

**When:** April 10, 2006 8:00 pm

**Where:** University of Michigan Campus

**Contact:** Jennifer Hsieh ([jehsieh@med.umich.edu](mailto:jehsieh@med.umich.edu))

**Description:** Conventionally, most people believe that morality can only be based in religious faith—that in a world without God, no principles of right and wrong could exist. Related to this, philosophers have long held that no objective, fact-based, rational code of values is possible. Regarding both points, this talk shows that the exact opposite is true. The purpose of morality is rooted in a factual requirement: the need to guide human life on earth. Religion is utterly incapable of successfully doing so. Life requires a naturalistic code of rationality, egoism and freedom. Religious faith clashes with every principle of a proper moral code

and, as such, has led, and can only lead, to hell on earth.

**Further Info:** <http://www.umso.org>

## Lawrence University (Appleton, WI)

**What:** Public Lecture, "The Morality of War"

**Speaker:** Dr. Yaron Brook

**When:** April 6, 2006 8:00 pm

**Where:** Lawrence University, Memorial Union, Riverview Lounge

**Contact:** Eric Lanser ([eric.w.lanser@lawrence.edu](mailto:eric.w.lanser@lawrence.edu))

**Description:** As the death toll of American troops continues to mount, we are told this war must drag on for years to come – and it will demand even more sacrifices from our soldiers. At home, we are urged to accept the inevitability of further catastrophic terrorist attacks. Is a quick military victory within our reach? If so, why must so many of our soldiers and now civilians die? Why does Washington seem to care more about avoiding civilian casualties in Baghdad than in New York City, Denver or San Francisco? Why are terrorists – who deliberately target children and other civilians for slaughter – accorded the rights under the Geneva Convention? Dr. Yaron Brook, Executive Director of the Ayn Rand Institute, explains how America's War on Terrorism is being sabotaged by the moral code of altruism – embodied in the "just-war" theory – that drive's Washington's war strategy. He offers an alternative – a Morality Of War – based on Ayn Rand's rational egoism, an alternative that is a practical and rational solution to Islamic terrorism.

**Further Info:** [www.uscobjectivistclub.com](http://www.uscobjectivistclub.com)

**Speakers:** To Pre-serve: Jeffrey A. Finkle (President and CEO of the International Economic Development Council).

To Abolish: Yaron Brook (Executive Director of the Ayn Rand Institute)

**When:** Monday, May 1, 2006, 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM  
**Where:** Holeman Lounge, National Press Club, 529 14th St. NW, 13th Floor, Washington, D.C.

**Cost:** Free

## The Ayn Rand Institute (Irvine, CA)

**What:** Introduction to Ayn Rand's Philosophy

**When:** Wednesdays, April 26 thru May 31st

**Cost:** \$99 for general attendees, \$25 for students and teachers

**Description:** The Ayn Rand Institute is offering a six-session introductory course on Ayn Rand's philosophy, which she named Objectivism. The course is designed for readers of Ayn Rand's fiction who are now interested in learning the basics of her philosophical system. Classes begin April 26 at 7:30 PM (Pacific). Participants may attend in person at ARI's offices in Irvine, California, live via telephone, or by listening to recordings of each class through the Internet. For more information on the course and how to register, please visit [www.objectivistconferences.com/intro](http://www.objectivistconferences.com/intro).

**What:** Lecture by Tara Smith (Title to be announced)

**When:** Tuesday, May 9, 2006

**Where:** Hyatt Regency Irvine; 17900 Jamboree Road; Irvine, California

**Cost:** Free

**What:** Lecture by Onkar Ghate

**When:** Thursday, June 1, 2006

**Where:** Hyatt Regency Irvine; 17900 Jamboree Road; Irvine, California

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**Where:** Hyatt Regency Irvine; 17900 Jamboree Road; Irvine, California

**Cost:** Free

**What:** Objectivist Academic Center application deadline

**When:** April 16, 2006

**Description:** Apply by this date for admission to the Objectivist Academic Center's four-year undergraduate program on objective thought and communication. Visit [www.aynrand.org](http://www.aynrand.org) for more information.

## National University (La Jolla, CA)

**What:** Earn college credit for studying Objectivism

**When:** Fall 2006

**Where:** Online

**Contact:** Dr. Brian Simpson ([bsimpson@nu.edu](mailto:bsimpson@nu.edu))

**Description:** An undergraduate course that uses Ayn Rand's *The Virtue of Selfishness* and *Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal* as the required reading material is available to enroll in at National University of San Diego. This course is ECO 430 – Economics & Philosophy. The course will be taught online, and a limited number of scholarships are available. In this course, students will learn about the relationship between philosophy and economics. They will study the philosophic foundations of free market economics, as well as other economic ideas. They will learn about the link between ethics and economics, as well as about the important function of businesses in the economy. Students will study topics such as the Objectivist ethics, altruism, individualism, racism, the virtue of integrity, why businessmen should be honest, the nature of the antitrust laws, the gold standard, the nature of government and rights, government financing in a free society, among other topics. This course will be taught by Dr. Brian Simpson, an assistant professor in the School of Business and Management at National University.

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