

# 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

## REJECT ENVIRONMENTALISM, NOT DDT

Environmental ideology demands opposition to DDT despite the millions of malaria deaths its use could prevent.



by Keith Lockitch

The World Health Organization has announced that it will encourage the use of DDT to fight malaria, a mosquito-borne disease that kills a million people a year. This announcement is a positive development, but it is tragic that malaria was allowed to persist unchecked for so long.

Though nearly eradicated decades ago, malaria has resurged with a vengeance because DDT, the most effective agent of mosquito control, had been essentially discarded--discarded based not on scientific concerns about its safety, but on environmental dogma.

The environmental crusade against DDT began with Rachel Carson's antipesticide diatribe "Silent Spring,"

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Freedom vs. Security: The False Alternative page 3

Kelly's Article on Environmentalism page 5

The Military Doctrine of Altruism page 7

Speakers, Events, and Meetings page 8

### 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).

## The Religion of Peace

The West is ignoring totalitarian Islam's active crusade to impose Muslim law on the world.



by Rebecca Knapp

This September, in a speech at the University of Regensburg in Germany, Pope Benedict quoted an ancient source that identified Muslims as violent. "Show me just what Mohammed brought that was new," wrote the 14th century Byzantine emperor quoted by the Pope, "and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached." It is unclear whether the Pope intended to endorse this quote, or to himself imply that Muslims today were violent. What is clear is that Muslims responded with violence. They attacked churches, burned the Pope in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

# The Religion of Peace

CONTINUED FROM COVER

effigy, kicked the ashes, and possibly even killed a nun (though it was not proven that this murder was specifically motivated by revenge against the Pope).

The gangs of Muslims responsible for the violence did not notice the irony: insulted by the insinuation that their religion demanded violence, they used violence to squelch the too-accurate insult. The very manner of their response demonstrated the accuracy of the Pope's accusation. Nevertheless, the Pope quickly apologized, and that particular furor gradually died down.

These events made the news, but no one seemed all that shocked. The reaction against the Pope's speech was just another instance of a growing trend. Violence perpetrated by Muslims in the name of Islam is a pervasive problem in the modern world, just as it was in the 14th century. Indeed, violence in the name of Islam is by far more frequent than in the name of any other religion—probably more so than all the rest combined.

Since the destruction of the World Trade Center five years ago, terrorist plots by Islamic jihadists are uncovered on a monthly basis. From Israel, to India, to Africa, to Russia, to Europe, governments are struggling to circumvent Muslim activists committed to violence.

The violence isn't limited to avowed terrorists. Last winter, more than 100 people died when thousands of Muslim youth across the world, following the encouragement of their religious leaders, took to the streets in angry protest of the Danish Mohammed cartoons. This September, a Berlin opera company disrupted its production schedule to cancel production of Mozart's *Idomeneo*. The company worried that a scene in which the king presents the head of Mohammed might spark a response similar to that evoked by the cartoons. (In the same scene, the king presents the heads of Jesus and Buddha, yet the company did not worry that Christians or Buddhists would riot and issue fatwa.)

Going back a few more months, Comedy Central cancelled a portion of a South Park episode depicting Mohammad because it was too dangerous. South Park then nonchalantly proceeded to a show a skit that outrageously insulted Jesus. Go back a few months more, and one finds the Museum of World Culture in Sweden removing an erotic painting from their walls after Muslims expressed their outrage.

Are all Muslims violent? Clearly not.

American Muslims in particular do not seem prone to violence. The trend described above is not a reason to condemn individuals, merely because they are Muslim.

The trend itself, however, seems undeniable. Around the globe, Muslims appear to be violently attacking those who offend their sensibilities. The incidence of violence perpetrated in the name of Islam, in Western countries and throughout the world, is huge when compared with any other religious group today. A disproportionate number of Muslims clash violently with non-Muslims, and a disproportionate number of Muslim countries clash violently with non-Muslim countries. As Samuel Huntington put this point in his essay, *The Clash of Civilizations*, "Violence...occurs between Muslims, on the one hand, and Orthodox Serbs

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**Violence in the name of Islam is by far more frequent than in the name of any other religion—probably more so than all the rest combined.**

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in the Balkans, Jews in Israel, Hindus in India, Buddhists in Burma and Catholics in the Philippines. Islam has bloody borders."

More Muslims endorse violence than are violent themselves. Falling into this camp is any Muslim who accepts, loudly or tacitly, with the political ideology of totalitarian Islam. Totalitarian Islam is the view that Islamic law should govern human action in all spheres, and particularly in politics. To achieve this goal, Muslims must wage a war on the rest of civilization, and forcibly impose Islam, the only law sanctioned by God, on the world. Those who espouse this idea do not call this totalitarian Islam. They simply call it Islam. But this is the meaning of the idea that a religion should forcibly conquer a people and force it to obey God's dictates: it means a totalitarian regime in the name of that religion. Any Muslim who agrees with totalitarian Islam is by that fact endorsing violence. Violence perpetrated by Muslims is on the rise because the ideology of totalitarian Islam is on the rise.

Muslim political and religious leaders (there is little difference between the two) make no bones about endorsing this ideology. The Middle East Media Research Institute ([www.memri.org](http://www.memri.org)) translates Arab news, television, and other media into English. Read a transcript of a televised sermon.

These are diatribes on the theme of Islamic supremacy, and the need to fight to spread Islam throughout the West. Together, Muslim congregations chant to their leaders: "Allah Akbar. Allah Akbar. Death to those who oppose the rule of the jurisprudent. Death to America. Death to England. Death to Israel." To quote an Indonesian cleric: "The Quran has all the guidelines, rules, norms, laws and punishments we need...If the Prophet carried a spear then...we can carry an M-16." To quote a children's program by an Egyptian cleric: "Sa'id, the 15-year-old child, was martyred for the sake of Allah. He died happy." The examples from the clerics of Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Indonesia—the leaders of the Muslim world—are endless.

So many Americans are hostile to the observation that Muslims are increasingly violent. The factual claims reported in this article are sure to be met by the cry of, "racism!" Racism, though, has a specific meaning. To be racist is to judge or discriminate against an individual based on his membership in a group. It is not racist to judge a system of beliefs, or to notice that that system of beliefs leads to a certain type of behavior. If it were, then you would be racist any time you disagreed with someone. It is not racist to criticize conservatives who are against abortion, liberals who favor socialized medicine, Christians who want to demolish the barrier between church and state, or Muslims who believe that violence in the name of Islam is morally justified.

Individuals choose what ideas they hold. Adult Muslims, like all individuals, have the power to reject any belief they have grown up with. If they choose instead to endorse the ideology of totalitarian Islam, it is rational, not racist, to judge them on those grounds.

It's hard to think of a religion that hasn't been used as a banner for violence at some point in its history. Certainly it is fair to call the Pope a hypocrite for ignoring Christianity's own bloody past. The difference is that Muslims are in the midst of an active, long-term crusade to forcibly impose Islam, in the form of sharia law, on the rest of the world. They are already succeeding. They have silenced cartoonists, authors, artists, musicians, journalists, and comedians. They have destroyed embassies, murdered their ideological opponents, and toppled the World Trade Center. The ideal of totalitarian Islam does not drive isolated pockets of radicals, but a widespread, organized movement that threatens America. Until Americans have the honesty to admit it, they will be at the mercy of an unnamed enemy.

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# Freedom vs. Security: The False Alternative

Many people assume that freedom and security are opposing values, but are they really in conflict?



by Noah Stahl

What's more important: freedom or security? Since 9/11, we've heard this question in debates over issues ranging from the Patriot Act to wire-tapping to interrogation techniques.

There are two common answers. On one side are the civil libertarians who argue that the government's security enhancements curtail individual freedom. This side often quotes Benjamin Franklin's warning that "those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety deserve neither."

On the other side are the conservatives who argue that securing the nation requires sacrificing some of our rights. The price of living in safety, they say, is allowing the government to violate our freedom if and when it deems necessary.

On the face of it, each side seems both right and wrong. We value freedom—the ability to choose who we associate with, where and when we travel, what religion we practice, what ideas we hold. But while freedom is important, so is security—we need to be safe in

order to live. Nobody could enjoy either freedom under constant threat, or security inside a cage. So which do we choose—freedom or security? We find ourselves confronted with an apparently hopeless dilemma.

But it's a trick question. The way out of the apparent dilemma between freedom and security is to reject the underlying idea that the two are in conflict, and that a trade-off is necessary.

Consider the roots of this debate,

which go back much further than 9/11 to 17th century philosopher Thomas Hobbes. Mankind exists, said Hobbes, on a continuum between two states. On one end is the pre-government state of nature, where people live in a "war of all against all", each attempting to victimize others while defending himself against their predations. This is Hobbes' picture of complete freedom.

On the other end is society under an authoritarian state, where the government exerts unchecked power over its subjects, preventing them from doing anything it deems disruptive to the public order. This is Hobbes' picture of complete security.

Though most reject Hobbes' preferred solution of an all-powerful government, they nevertheless accept his proposed continuum, opting

instead to strike a "balance" between the two extremes. Both sides of the debate acknowledge that each extreme poses a threat--and then each gravitates towards the one which makes it less nervous.

Hence, the civil libertarians, more concerned by the threat of a powerful government

than by the threat of terrorists, choose to accept the potential for increased terrorism as the lesser of two evils. On the premise that increased security means less freedom, they reject attempts by the government to combat terrorism with tougher security measures like wiretapping and the Patriot Act.

The conservative sympathizers of Hobbes, on the other hand, argue that a more intrusive state is the answer to the threat of Islamic terrorism-- and

choose to accept the potential for increased government oppression as the lesser of two evils. On the premise that increased freedom means less security, they reject the need for government to be restrained by warrants, judicial oversight, and constitutional provisions like habeas corpus.

But both sides are wrong because Hobbes was wrong. In mischaracterizing freedom as the state of anarchy and security as life under the protective fist of government oppression, Hobbes creates a false alternative. It is only by accepting this alternative that we're led to believe freedom and security are conflicting goals.

Where one philosopher led us into this

mess, another can lead us out: Ayn Rand and her philosophy of Objectivism. Rand argues that "Freedom... has only one meaning: the absence of physical coercion." A man is free to act so long he is left unrestrained and unthreatened by others. It is only in the presence of physical coercion, i.e. insecurity, that a man loses his freedom. In this broad sense, freedom and security are synonymous. To be free is to be secure. To be secure is to be free. Proper security measures taken at stadiums, for example, make possible the freedom to watch and enjoy sporting events.

In failing to recognize this harmony, we are led to believe that freedom entails allowing terrorists to plot against us with impunity, and that security entails allowing government to violate our rights at whim. Instead, we should pursue both freedom and security—by allowing the government to vigorously combat terrorists in a manner consistent with freedom.

Fundamentally, this entails striking at the source of terrorism by prosecuting war against regimes like Iran

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

**We are led to believe that freedom entails allowing terrorists to plot against us with impunity, and that security entails allowing government to violate our rights at whim.**

**Nobody could enjoy either freedom under constant threat, or security in a cage. So which do we choose?**

# The Environmentalist Attack on Prosperity

Environmentalism, consistently implemented, would annihilate civilization in the name of nature.



by Kelly Cadenas

Environmentalism is becoming increasingly popular in today's culture. Politicians shower us with graphs illustrating the correlation between rising carbon dioxide levels, higher temperatures, and rising sea levels. In his popular documentary, *An Inconvenient Truth*, former vice-president Al Gore urges us to take immediate action against global warming by reducing the amount of human-generated greenhouse gases in the atmosphere—a goal that would hinder technological and industrial progress. The pervasive environmental alarmism has encouraged the state of California to pass numerous laws aimed at regulating carbon dioxide emissions and financing research on alternative, eco-friendly sources of energy. We at *The Undercurrent* thus wondered whether college students have also fallen prey to the virulent anti-technological rhetoric of environmentalists. With the hope of discovering a pro-technological, pro-industrial stance, we surveyed a range of publications at major universities.

Although scientists are far from arriving at a consensus about the cause and future of global warming, let us assume for the sake of argument that global warming is true and, more interestingly, that it has been conclusively determined that human beings are the cause of today's environmental crisis. What then should we do to avert disaster and save ourselves from extinction? Should we sacrifice human progress and hamper technological achievement to keep nature in a pristine condition or should we solve our environmental problems with more advanced and efficient technology?

It is rather unfortunate that most students support environmental initiatives while vaguely recognizing that adopting such proposals could have detrimental effects on the American economy. Daily Californian reporter Sarah Kamshoshy documented a recent debate at UC Berkeley on Proposition 87, a plan "that would levy a tax on California's oil producers"

while preventing them from raising gas prices to maintain a profit. Tax revenue will help finance several governmental projects and provide millions of dollars for research on alternative energy sources. But despite their concerns that it "could hurt the state economy," most students concluded that "the proposition might lead California down a more environmentally conscious path."

Luckily, not all students are blinded by Al Gore's claims that Proposition 87 will help fight global warming and de-

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**If we implement their doctrine we would "save this world" not for the sake of man, but for the sake of nature.**

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crease our dependence on foreign oil. In a Daily Bruin piece, UCLA alumnus Michael Helperin notes that Prop. 87 "will increase the ratio of imported over domestic oil...and add little to the growth of alternative energy." Forcing domestic oil companies to pay taxes while preventing them from raising prices can only harm their productivity, which would lead us to "increase the quantity of oil we import." How then could such a plan reduce the amount of carbon dioxide emissions and counteract global climate change? Its sole purpose is to punish Californian oil businesses for providing consumers with the energy necessary to fuel their cars, airplanes, and heat their homes.

If taxing oil companies proves an unfeasible plan, the next logical step in our quest to find a viable solution would involve placing the burden on the consumers. Thomas Bohnett, author of "What then must we do?" in the Daily Princetonian adopts precisely this kind of attitude. Air travel, he writes, "is a very dirty habit," one that "can lead to more carbon emissions than...driving." He therefore concludes that we must reduce—if not

surrender altogether—our selfish tendencies to "step on an airplane." "If we give up air travel for pleasure, we can take up the kind of lives in which we don't need it nearly so much...ultimately, the rejection of air travel is an expression of hope, a belief that we can save this world if only we make the necessary sacrifices."

Air transport is one of modern society's most important industries: its technological achievements and wide-ranging services have improved the quality of our lives in unprecedented ways. Air travel provides us with a larger selection of vacation destinations, helps broaden our cultural experiences, and offers a more affordable and convenient way to visit family and friends.

Now imagine for a moment that all of us accept Bohnett's proposal and apply it seriously to our daily lives. We know that the typical college student relies heavily on air travel. Adopting such a lifestyle would imply fewer visits to family and friends and fewer opportunities to study abroad. We would have to rely on more expensive, inconvenient, and slower methods of transportation to reach far-away destinations.

Implementing Bohnett's self-sacrificial standard would lead us to do the same with automobiles, trucks, air conditioners, heating systems, not to mention the countless man-made appliances that require electricity. And to take this a step further, we would have to renounce all goods shipped via truck or airplane and all commodities that contain plastic. Essentially, we would have to put an end to our fossil fuel burning days and say goodbye to everything even remotely dependent on it. But of course we all know that burning fossil fuels is not the only way to generate greenhouse gases. If we really want to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere we should also stop eating foods grown in soil supplemented with agricultural lime and perhaps go so far as to stop breathing—after all, why not eradicate man, the root cause of all our current troubles?

How then can we "save this world," as Bohnett himself claims, if we have to give up those things which improve the quality of our lives? Yet this is what en-

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 7**

# The Military Doctrine of Altruism

Altruism undermines the technological greatness of the American military, and prevents us from fighting our enemies.



by John Lewis

A New York Times editorial recently described the military skills our soldiers will need, to do what our politicians are asking them to do (“Military Hones a New Strategy on Insurgency,” October 5, 2006). The new doctrine renounces overwhelming force, focuses on reacting to insurgent attacks rather than winning offensive battles, and has a goal of protecting civilians rather than defeating a hostile enemy.

Before the 2004 election, Vice-President Cheney lambasted John Kerry for wanting to fight a more “sensitive” war. But Mr. Cheney should rather have agreed with Mr. Kerry, since that is exactly what we are doing.

The Times article is right: at military conferences, and in discussions with military officers and instructors, I continue to hear how we must change attitudes among a foreign population rather than use our force, and how it is preferable to let a “bad guy” escape rather than hurt a civilian. The military is developing new tactics to achieve such ends.

In a visit to the military simulators at Fort Riley, Kansas, for instance, I saw a stunning array of technology. One enters a warehouse-style building, full of metal cubes with doors. Close the door, and you are in a mock-up of an M1 Abrams tank commander’s display, with monitors and controls identical to real-world con-

ditions. Once the action starts, you will think you are in a tank. Tanks can be networked, and sent on a mission. Instructors can ambush them, and monitor their actions. Afterwards, in a classroom, participants can see an overhead view of the entire operation, and evaluate every move from above.

The technology is space-age—but what of the goals to which the technology is being employed? It was once the case—in a by-gone era—that our goal in war was to defeat an enemy. This meant demonstrating to enemy leaders, warriors, and civilians that victory was impossible, by convincing them that further fighting was hopeless. The results can be seen in Japan, a country that has renounced military attack and embraced prosperity and freedom.

Under such principles, the regime in Iran, for instance, which is providing a steady stream of arms and support into Iraq, would not be allowed to remain in power. Local warlords would face overwhelming assault. Civilians would learn not to side with the losing side. The better civilians—those who really do not want war—would gain safety from the defeat of a dictatorship, and would have a chance for a better life.

But the new doctrine is designed for different goals. The new wisdom is: “the more force is used, the less effective it is.” The army must “clear, hold and build,” since building things for a foreign population is more important than demanding their surrender. The enemy’s safe-havens, his defiant leadership, and sympathetic civilians, are not to be attacked. “Tactical success guarantees nothing”; the new aim

is “to protect the Iraqis against intimidation.”

One wonders how the police in New York could protect a grocer from the intimidation of organized gangsters without destroying the Mafia that funds them—but this, in essence, is the new military mission.

There is one big idea behind this thinking, one idea that establishes the political and intellectual context for the new doctrine: altruism. It is altruism (“otherism”) that elevates the value of others over self. It is altruism that places our soldiers into the service of other civilians in other countries, to promote the stability of other governments who uphold values other than ours, to respect the interests of others, even those who want to kill us. It is altruism that demands billions in foreign aid from us to others, while our people are beheaded on television.

Altruism is the moral principle behind today’s Just War Theory—the direct application of altruism to the question of military ethics and doctrine.

An offensive war, waged against those who launch attacks against us, is premised upon the opposite conclusion: that our own people, and our own cause, are more valuable than the enemy and his cause. Every soldier who shoots an enemy, and every president who issues an ultimatum to a hostile power, is presuming this judgment.

According to altruism, however, this is self-interested, and thereby “morally tainted,” in the words of Peter Schwartz (The Foreign Policy of Self-Interest, ARI Press, 2004). The new aim of the

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 7**

## Freedom vs. Security:

### The False Alternative

CONTINUED FROM  
PAGE 3

who support terrorists and their ideology of Islamic totalitarianism. Absent such action, security is virtually impossible—a police state, however intrusive, cannot

secure a nation against foreign aggressors.

Insofar as domestic measures like wiretapping are needed in addition to war, civil libertarians are wrong to oppose them solely out of antipathy for government power. Rather, we should expand as much as possible the ability of the government to secure our freedom. Used properly, governmental powers like eavesdropping, airport security, profiling, and interrogation are not threats to

freedom, but means to secure it.

Such powers can and must be implemented in a way consistent with freedom, i.e. guided by unambiguous, objective laws and subject to constitutional checks and balances. This demands that warrants, due process, judicial oversight and other constitutional limits be required in any investigation or detention of U.S. residents.

By rejecting the philosophical errors that plague

the debate over national defense, we can move towards a system that protects all our values at the expense of none. To the perennial question, “freedom or security,” we can answer: both.

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# Reject Environmentalism, Not DDT

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published in 1962 at the height of the worldwide anti-malaria campaign. The wide spread spraying of DDT had caused a spectacular drop in malaria incidence--Sri Lanka, for example, reported 2.8 million malaria victims in 1948, but by 1963 it had only 17. Yet Carson's book made no mention of this. It said nothing of DDT's crucial role in eradicating malaria in industrialized countries, or of the tens of millions of lives saved by its use.

Instead, Carson filled her book with misinformation--alleging, among other claims, that DDT causes cancer. Her unsubstantiated assertion that continued DDT-use would unleash a cancer epidemic generated a panicked fear of the pesticide that endures as public opinion to this day.

But the scientific case against DDT was, and still is, nonexistent. Almost 60 years have passed since the malaria-spraying campaigns began--with hundreds of millions of people exposed to large concentrations of DDT--yet, according to international health scholar Amir Attaran, the scientific literature "has not even one peer reviewed, independently replicated study linking exposure to DDT with any adverse health outcome." Indeed, in a 1956 study human volunteers ate DDT every day for over two years with no ill effects then or since.

Abundant scientific evidence supporting the safety and importance of DDT was presented during seven months of testimony before the newly formed EPA in 1971. The presiding judge ruled unequivocally against a ban. But the public furor against DDT--fueled by "Silent Spring" and the growing environmental movement--was so great that a ban was imposed anyway. The EPA administrator, who hadn't even bothered to attend the hearings, overruled his own judge and imposed the ban in defiance of the facts and evidence. And the 1972 ban in the United States led to an effective worldwide ban, as countries dependent on U.S.-funded aid agencies curtailed their DDT use to comply with those agencies' demands.

So if scientific facts are not what

has driven the furor against DDT, what has? Estimates put today's malaria incidence worldwide at around 300 million cases, with a million deaths every year. If this enormous toll of human suffering and death is preventable, why do environmentalists--who profess to be the defenders of life--continue to oppose the use of DDT?

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The answer is that environmental ideology values an untouched environment above human life. The root of the opposition to DDT is not science but the environmentalist moral premise that it is wrong for man to "tamper" with nature.

The large-scale eradication of disease-carrying insects epitomizes the control of nature by man. This is DDT's sin. To Carson and the environmentalists she inspired, "the 'control of nature' is a phrase conceived in arrogance, born of the Neanderthal age of biology and philosophy." Nature, they hold, is intrinsically valuable and must be kept free from human interference.

On this environmentalist premise the proper attitude to nature is not to seek to improve it for human benefit, but to show "humility" before its "vast forces" and leave it alone. We should seek, Carson wrote, not to eliminate malarial mosquitoes with pesticides, but to find instead "a rea-

sonable accommodation between the insect hordes and ourselves." If the untouched, "natural" state is one in which millions contract deadly diseases, so be it.

Carson's current heirs agree. Earth First! founder Dave Foreman writes: "Ours is an ecological perspective that views Earth as a community and recognizes such apparent enemies as 'disease' (e.g., malaria) and 'pests' (e.g., mosquitoes) not as manifestations of evil to be overcome but rather as vital and necessary components of a complex and vibrant biosphere."

In the few minutes it has taken you to read this article, over a thousand people have contracted malaria and half a dozen have died. This is the life-or-death consequence of viewing pestilent insects as a "necessary" component of a "vibrant biosphere" and seeking a "reasonable accommodation" with them.

The WHO's support for DDT use is an encouraging step toward stopping this global health catastrophe. But even more important is to reject the environmental ideology on which opposition to DDT is based.

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## *The Environmentalist Attack on Prosperity*

CONTINUED FROM  
PAGE 4

environmentalists and students like Bohnett encourage us to do in the face of environmental “danger.” If we implement their doctrine we would “save this world” not for the sake of man, but for the sake of nature. Man without technology

is a helpless animal. It only takes a quick look at the undeveloped parts of the world or even a look back at the times prior to the industrial revolution to recognize the vital role of technology in man’s life.

After reading through countless articles about the imminent threat of global warming, we found an op-ed in the Harvard Crimson in which Piotr Brzezinski challenges the mainstream assumption that there is indisputable scientific evidence for global warming and advises environmentalists to re-examine “long unques-

tioned theories and policies,” such as the Kyoto Treaty.

Scientists are in fact far from arriving at a consensus about the cause and future of global warming. It is interesting that even those who warn us about global dangers recognize the shortcomings of super-computer models. In a Daily Californian interview, Professor Inez Fung admits that her calculations about “the future of carbon emissions” are “suggestive rather than conclusive” because of the guesswork involved in picturing scenarios “never

encountered before.” These predictive models, however, are the source of the “evidence” cited by policy-makers everywhere. Little do we hear about current research, like that conducted by Dr. Patterson at Carleton University, which reveals a strong correlation between “temperature and natural celestial phenomena such [as] changes in the brightness of the Sun.”

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## *The Military Doctrine of Altruism*

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

war—now taken as an unquestioned absolute—is to bring good things to the population of a hostile nation, to “win the hearts and minds” of others so they will embrace “democracy” and throw flowers on us.

It is altruism that subjects our soldiers to a slow bleed of dead and wounded, in order to avoid confronting an enemy leader or hurting a shopkeeper. It is altruism that is telling our soldiers to shrink the range of their minds from long-term victory, to building toilets for a hostile population. It is altruism that values the life of a foreign civilian over the death of a soldier killing Americans.

Since altruism provides no goals for the war—it says only that the goals must be good for others—a lack of purpose is the inevitable result. The decline of support in America for the Iraq war is a consequence of the inability to understand why one American should die for the Iraqis. And the contempt for America in the Middle East is the result of our unwillingness to assert ourselves, and to destroy those spreading of vicious propaganda. What altruists see as virtuous deference to the needs of others, enemies overseas take as weakness of will and submission.

Some commentators have praised this new military doctrine, while whitewashing its implications. Counter-insurgency war is not about victory or defeat, runs one argument; democracy for others is our purpose, and will be the “final stage” of the war. We should fight on until the

enemy establishes an electoral “Vote for Liberty!” campaign, blanking out the fact that “liberty” has a specific meaning, that people who do not understand it cannot be expected to defend it, and that any moral standard which requires us to sacrifice our liberty for theirs is a repudiation of liberty at its root.

The real problem, say others, is “leftists” who want to “cut and run”—evading the fact that the New Left political and economic agenda has been adopted lock stock and barrel by the New Conserva-

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**It is altruism that subjects our soldiers to a slow bleed of dead and wounded, in order to avoid confronting an enemy leader or hurting a shopkeeper.**

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tives, and that it was the liberal Woodrow Wilson who proclaimed “Peace Without Victors” in 1918. Just War Theory itself is a leftist construct that has been embraced by conservative leaders, in many cases for its allegedly compassionate overtones. Mr. Cheney may chide Mr. Kerry—but the administration has taken the democrat’s advice, and acted with inordinate sensitivity. The result has been anything but compassionate.

Military experts are warning that we do not have enough resources to act this way. Since the military’s job is now to “counter” an endless “insurgency,” we would need as many army squads as there are buildings and street corners in the Middle East. Proponents claim that such a war may take fifteen years for Iraq

alone—without considering the support flowing in from surrounding areas. The doctrine is a prescription for an unending stream of body-bags, with no victory in sight because no victory is being pursued.

America’s increasing technological superiority, combined with deepening fog surrounding the moral purpose of that technology, is a symptom of the gulf between science and the humanities that has characterized the past two hundred years. We combine soaring advancements in the capacity to control nature, with stagnation and regression in our understanding of man’s moral nature. If we do not get a grip on the moral goodness of self-interested action in pursuit of victory over theocratic dictators, our army will continue to increase in technological efficacy, all the while we sacrifice it to the bathroom needs of foreigners.

Unfortunately, none of this will deter the advocates of a sacrificial foreign policy, for they are driven by a moral ideal—altruism—that carries more weight in their minds than the need to defend our own freedom and our own lives. It is for those who recognize the goodness in defending life, liberty and freedom, against its enemies, to offer a different policy.

*Dr. John Lewis is assistant professor of history at Ashland University. He is the author of Solon the Thinker: Political Thought in Archaic Athens, and is now completing a book, “Nothing Less Than Victory: Military Offense and the Lessons of History.” He is contributing editor to The Objective Standard.*

*Versions of this article first appeared in the blog of The Objective Standard, <http://theobjectivestandard.com/blog/>, and in Capitalism Magazine, <http://www.capmag.com/article.asp?ID=4812>.*

# SPEAKERS, EVENTS, MEETINGS

## UNIVERSITY OBJECTIVIST CLUB EVENTS:

**University of California, Los Angeles (Los Angeles, CA)**

### Announcement:

L.O.G.I.C. will hold weekly meetings this year.

**When:** Wednesdays, 7:30pm

**Where:** MS 31395H

**Further info:** Visit <http://www.ClubLogic.org> for more information. Time and location are tentative.

**What:** Tentative lecture

Religion vs. Morality

**When:** TBA

**Where:** UCLA campus

**Contact:** <http://www.ClubLogic.org>

**University of California, Berkeley (Berkeley, CA)**

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

**Further info:** Contact Kate Brakora ([kbrakora@berkeley.edu](mailto:kbrakora@berkeley.edu))

**San Francisco State University (San Francisco, CA)**

**Announcement:** SFSU Students of Objectivism will hold regular meetings this semester.

**When:** TBA

**Where:** Cesar Chavez Student Center

**Further info:** Contact [aynrand@sfsu.edu](mailto:aynrand@sfsu.edu)

**Harvard University (Harvard, MA)**

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

**Further info:** Contact [hoc@hcs.harvard.edu](mailto:hoc@hcs.harvard.edu) or visit <http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/~hoc> for more information.

**What:** Public Lecture- The Fountainhead and

the Spirit of Youth  
**Speaker:** Mr. B. John Bayer

**When:** Sept. 21, 2006; Time TBA

**Contact:** [hoc@hes.harvard.edu](mailto:hoc@hes.harvard.edu)

**Georgia Institute of Technology (Atlanta, GA)**

**Announcement:** Georgia Tech Students of Objectivism will hold regular meetings this semester.

**Further info:** Visit <http://cyberbuzz.gatech.edu/aynrand>

**Pennsylvania State University (State College, PA)**

**What:** Public Lecture, "Global Capitalism: The Solution to World Oppression and Poverty"

**Speaker:** Dr. Andrew Bernstein

**When:** Sept 11, 2006; 7:30 pm

**Where:** Thomas Building, Penn State University, State College, PA, 16802

**Contact:** <http://psucapitalism.com>

**New York University (New York, NY)**

**Announcement:** Regular Meetings for those with an interest in Ayn Rand! We have two groups: one for those committed to learning the philosophy and living life by its principles and one for those with a more introductory interest.

**Further info:** Contact Kara Zavarella ([nyuoc\\_president@yahoo.com](mailto:nyuoc_president@yahoo.com))

**What:** Public Lecture Five Years After 9/11: Why We are Losing the War  
**Speaker:** Dr. John Lewis

**When:** Sept. 20, 2006; 7:30 PM

**Where:** Kimmel Center; 20 Washington Square South; New York, NY  
**Contact:** [nyuoc\\_president@yahoo.com](mailto:nyuoc_president@yahoo.com)

**Tufts University (Boston, MA)**

**Announcement:** Public Lecture- The Fountainhead and the Spirit of Youth

**Speaker:** Mr. B. John Bayer

**When:** Sept. 21, 2006; Time TBA

**Where:** Tufts University, Barnum Hall Room 104

**Contact:** [eugenia.gorlin@tufts.edu](mailto:eugenia.gorlin@tufts.edu)

**Announcement:** Public Lecture- Israel and the War on Islamic Totalitarianism

**Speaker:** Dr. Yaron Brook

**When:** Oct. 20, 2006; 7:30 PM

**Where:** Tufts University, Barnum Hall Room 008

**Contact:** [eugenia.gorlin@tufts.edu](mailto:eugenia.gorlin@tufts.edu)

## GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

### Announcement:

OPAR Study Group  
**Contact:** Dalia Tubis ([daliatubis@yahoo.com](mailto:daliatubis@yahoo.com)) & Guy Barnett ([guyusj@hotmail.com](mailto:guyusj@hotmail.com))

### Announcement:

The Lucidicus Project is offering free books to medical students interested in learning about the moral and economic case for capitalism.  
**Contact:** Jared Rhoads ([jared.rhoads@lucidicus.org](mailto:jared.rhoads@lucidicus.org))

### Announcement:

Third Wednesday of the Month dinner gatherings  
**Contact:** [Togplsgruchala@comcast.net](mailto:Togplsgruchala@comcast.net)

### Announcement:

A three-day conference event- The Jihad Against the West: The Real Threat and the Right Response.

**Speakers:** Daniel Pipes, Yaron Brook, Flemming Rose, Robert Spencer, Peter Schwartz, John Lewis

**Where:** Boston, MA- Tufts University, Ford Hall/Faneuil Hall, Bos-

ton World Trade Center

**Further info:** Visit <http://www.objectivist-conferences.com/ford-hall06/>

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