

tended Sacred Heart College, still going strong). Apparently two plaques were put up by the United Daughters of the Confederacy to mark the site, ironically on Union Avenue, where Davis lodged with one of Montreal's leading citizens, John Lovell. White leftists and black activists have demanded that the plaques be removed. Only a French plaque remains.

—Lionel Albert
Montreal, Canada

On 'Your Papers, Please'

I don't know who Mr. R. Cort Kirkwood is or what his credentials to write about "law" are. His knee-jerk reaction (*Vital Signs*, November 1990) to efficiently verifiable identification of applicants for special recognition in the United States today compels me to suppose that they are minimal.

No one suggests that there be any compulsion to carry a card imposed on every person found on U.S. territory; what I do insist is that every applicant for a U.S. *privilege* established by law must be positively and promptly identifiable as a person qualified for it. By privilege I mean simply any benefit or penalty for which an identity is listed by the relevant law as a prerequisite. By way of examples, a driver's license, voter registration, passport, Social Security status, eligibility for some jobs. If any of these or any other examples are felt to be ones in which the requirement for identification has been improperly made, let's rewrite the law to eliminate it. Let's not insist that some constitutional right is infringed by effective and inexpensive enforcement of a proper requirement.

—W. Brown Morton, Jr.
Warsaw, VA

Mr. Kirkwood Replies:

I must admit, Mr. W. Brown Morton, Jr. is right in observing that "no one suggests that there be any compulsion to carry a card imposed on every person found on U.S. territory." I never said any such thing. What Mr. Morton hasn't discerned from reading the law is that the identification card legislation would require every American citizen to carry an unforgeable I.D. card to get any kind of work. Mr. Morton's complaint is with the fatheads in Congress, not with me.

I did not "insist" that "some constitutional right is infringed by effective and inexpensive enforcement of a proper requirement." In fact, I said "effective and inexpensive enforcement" — to use Mr. Morton's words — of existing immigration laws would obviate the need for American citizens to carry identification papers. As I observed in the article, if Congress did its duly appointed job — to protect the lives and property of American citizens — the U.S. Border Patrol would have enough money to do its job without adopting identification cards, fingerprints, and retina scanners to identify Americans like myself, who have paternal roots going back to the military campaigns of George Washington, for the purpose of employment.

—R. Cort Kirkwood

On 'Letter From the Lower Right'

Though John Shelton Reed's December column was engaging and enjoyable, he made a very common error in mistating the old saw about Yanks and Rebs together being invincible. As Mr. Reed put it, "one observer remarked

that if he had Confederate cavalry and Union infantry he could whip any army on earth."

The observer in question was North Carolina's own irascible and celebrated Yankee-hater, General Daniel Harvey Hill. On July 1, 1862, at Malvern Hill (presumably no relation), Hill watched Union artillery chew up wave after wave of Confederate infantrymen who had stupidly been ordered to assault dug-in Yankees uphill and across open ground, and who repeatedly did so with a determination equaled only by the Union infantrymen acting under similar orders at Fredericksburg in December of that same year.



Some twenty years after the war, Hill, in a *Century* magazine article titled "McClellan's Change of Base and Malvern Hill," paid justly deserved tribute to the courage and fighting skill of all the men on the field that day by writing, "The battle, with all its melancholy results, proved . . . that the Confederate infantry and Federal artillery, side by side on the same field, need fear no foe on earth."

The statement seems always to be either misquoted or wrongly attributed.

—James Morgan
Martinsburg, WV

Mr. Reed Replies:

Oops. Thanks to Mr. Morgan for setting me straight. Let's hope that Yanks and Rebs, in whatever combination, are still unbeatable. I don't know if our military scares Saddam Hussein, but it sure scares me.

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

FILMING AN EXECUTION at San Quentin Prison is what San Francisco's KQED has asked the U.S. District Court in California for permission to do: it wants the unedited tape to run nationwide over the Public Broadcasting Service network.

KQED is not doing this merely to

get higher audience ratings. It thinks that once people see what an execution is like, support for capital punishment will wane. Michael Schwartz, director of KQED's current affairs department, says, "We want the camera to be a neutral witness. The camera can do what no other medium can do, and

that's to bring the viewer to the event in an unmediated way."

True. In turn, KQED will want to show the other side of the story, too. To get the other side, KQED ought to ask various police departments in this country to supply the films they have of the victims of capital crimes. Then

when there's a showing of an execution, viewers will also see the victim of the crime, say, the mutilated corpse of a rape atrocity or some adolescent whose arms were hacked off, or the scantily clad casualties of the midnight strangler. Take the Willy Horton problem and the many kindhearted people like Michael Dukakis who think criminals shouldn't be put away in some solitary confinement as if they were savage jungle beasts. Why shouldn't KQED show police films of Willy Horton's victims? The camera could show the viewer his crimes in, to use Michael Schwartz's phrase, "an unmediated way."

I'm sure police departments will also supply films to the Public Broadcasting Service network and KQED of a murdered policeman's family mourning their loss. In keeping with KQED's sense of justice and fair play, the station might also want to show the awful condition of criminals who have been sentenced to life imprisonment, paired with, again, films of the victims of these jailed criminals.

KQED's idea to show executions and my idea to show how it all began before the murderer entered the death chamber could be a useful test for the pros and cons of capital punishment. First, you see the decomposing body of a molested six-year-old girl in some thicket being identified by her horror-stricken parents, and then you watch the execution of the convicted murderer. Without emotion you then tell KQED what you think of capital punishment.

It would be particularly valuable to show the victims of mass killers who had been released after serving short prison terms, who then went out and murdered again. The families of the second series of victims might be asked to give their views as the execution proceeded.

Lots of luck, KQED, as you proceed with your noble project.

—Arnold Beichman

AMERICAN EDUCATION is today so bureaucratized that every increase in tax monies poured into the system produces less real learning. We now spend approximately 33 percent more in real terms (\$5,638) per capita on students in elementary and second-

ary schools than we did ten years ago, but all valid measures show a decrease in learning with each ratchet-up in tax expenditures. Americans are especially anxious and frightened by our students' plummeting test scores precisely because we are still passionate believers in the value of schooling, and most Americans still believe more money is the answer. But informed observers know this is not so.

Vouchers and tax-deductions for education expenditures are obviously the simplest means, and the most politically acceptable means right now, for beginning a great "restructuring" of American education. Parents can use their tax vouchers or tax deductions to send their children to any school they deem the best. Education entrepreneurs of all kinds, from the dedicated young volunteers who love teaching to high-tech nerds bent on creating "interactive video programs," are paid to produce the greatest possible learning per dollar and the greatest investor satisfaction—that is, happy learners, parents, and taxpayers. The early experiments in vouchers for elementary education have been promising; in fact, even liberal educationists, the descendants of the Great Bureaucratizers, have grudgingly admitted that vouchers work. These people still hope to limit the vouchers to the public system, but they agree that smaller, competing public schools would be more efficient than the present big bureaucracies.

So far, the school voucher movement has focused on de-bureaucratizing neighborhood elementary schools. But the big bureaucracies, the Factories of Education, are not the elementary schools in your average local neighborhood. The real Franksteins of Education are our colossal state universities and state colleges. There are no elementary school campuses with ten thousand students milling around in anonymous herds, but there are scores of these colossal state universities processing millions of alienated students. Almost all private universities limit class sizes to from several hundred to several thousand students. Anything beyond that is found to breed unhappy customers who take their tuition money elsewhere. But the bureaucrats of the state universities have continued to build ever more colossal centers for

herding ever more unhappy students who learn less and less for ever more tax dollars.

Vouchers and tax credits are ideally suited for higher education. College students would have every incentive to seek out the schools that give them the best return for their vouchers and family tax-credits. The more bureaucratic reformers have already adopted a mass of student tests to hold schools accountable for their expenditures of tax dollars at lower levels, and these tests could be adapted for universities. Any student who falls below a certain academic level would simply lose his vouchers, and any institution with aggregate student scores below a minimal level would lose its accreditation to receive vouchers.

Many other incentives could be built into such a system. Students could be limited to a certain lifetime amount of vouchers, so they would have an incentive to find the place where they could get the maximum learning for the minimum cost. A certain minimum number of vouchers could be limited to general education requirements, which would probably breed an explosion of small private colleges, and others could be used for more specialized career training. If students were allowed to combine their specialized education vouchers with, say, corporate-sponsored training programs, then employers would have an incentive to give more matching funds for education.

Under a voucher system, college students would no longer be forced to "regurgitate" whatever values and ideological "spins" their state Education Factories embrace. Studies, such as the Carnegie Foundation's *The Condition of the Professoriate*, show that 70 percent of professors in the humanities and social sciences are self-labeled liberals. Since the majority of conservatives seem to be segregated into the schools in the South and Southwest, most students in this country find themselves subjected to the liberal ideology of these state Factories. Vouchers and tax credits, however, would end this indoctrination by the simple device of granting students "freedom of choice," which surely no honest liberal could oppose.

Some citizens might worry that this new system of education would under-

mine research, since one of the ostensive justifications for the Factories is that they allow their faculties time to do research and publish. But only a small number of the highly paid, tenured faculty at American universities publish anything. In the vast majority of Factories the unwritten rule for the highest paid faculty is "Don't publish and get rich." Since they also teach less and less, getting paid more and more in real terms for less and less work of any kind, they actually constitute monopolists happy to continue milking the public.

The search for truth and wisdom is the highest and most noble human pursuit, and there are many of us who continue in the quest. But most students and faculty members have been so demoralized by the bureaucratization of education that they laugh in derision at the very idea of pursuing knowledge. The great mass of college students now long only to "escape to the real world."

In his last article, the late A. Bartlett Giamatti, former president of Yale, noted, "I have never met a parent who has said to me, 'I'm really delighted with the quality of teaching, the sense of values, the direction the students get.'" I rest my case. Vouchers and tax credits will not usher in the promised land, nor will they transform the quad at State U. into the Lyceum. But they surely will bring an end to the Education Factories.

—Jack D. Douglas

THE NEA'S FUTURE has now been decided, the decision is by consensus, and the conservative position has prevailed. Chairman John Frohn-

mayer said so in a little-noticed appearance at the Newsmakers Breakfast at the National Press Club last September 17. Here is what he said: First, "I have argued all along that internal management reform and sensitivity to taxpayers will be the remedy of our problems." Translation: the artists' panels will no longer dictate who gets what. Taxpayers' opinion (read: people revolted by taxpayers' subsidies to political or obscene or bigoted or blasphemous art) will now make a difference.

Second, "Peer panel review system: a lay person now sits on each panel, that is, someone with a profound interest in the arts who does not make their [*sic*] living through the arts. We also recognized that the panels of citizen-experts had become, in their own eyes and in the eyes of many artists, infallible judges whose recommendations should not be questioned by either the National Council or the Chairperson [of the NEA]. That had to change, and the new attitude is a foundation for accountability in the future." Translation: the same thing again. The artists' panels will no longer dictate who gets what. Taxpayers' opinion will now make a difference.

Third, the "Endowment must reaffirm that it is for all the American people, rather than looking solely to the arts community. It is a question of finding a balance between the need for freedom of artistic expression and public accountability." Translation: the same thing a third time.

So much for a now-repudiated past. What about the future? Here the chairman defines an Endowment that will simply keep out of the public eye. It will "emphasize arts education," "emphasize delivery of arts to our

multicultural and rural communities," "emphasize the international activities of this agency," and "maintain, strengthen, and enhance our core institutions which are both the repositories of our past artistic genius and in many ways the hope for our future. Here I mean our museums, symphonies, theaters, operas, and all other major artistic groups." Translation: grants will mostly go to institutions, *e.g.*, schools, community organizations, international exhibitions, museums, and theaters, which can be trusted not to blow up Pittsburgh, and not so much to individual artists, who cannot be trusted.

The chairman's reiteration of the magic words conservatives have heard so little of in the past 18 months — "accountability," "taxpayer," "no longer solely for the arts community" — tells us that the NEA has finally capitulated to what I regard as good sense. It aims at a long future as a federal agency devoted to building audiences for the arts and institutions for the arts — but not financing the careers of artists. So no more politics in the guise of "art"; no more thousands of dollars of grants for bottles of urine; no more performance art that replaces Shakespeare with chocolate-covered shriekers; no more hysteria about censorship; and no more federal subsidies to the sectarian left.

The radicals of the art world get sizzle: no restrictive language governing the content of art supported by tax money. The great center position gets the steak: an Endowment that will not spend federal funds for left-wing propaganda masquerading as "art." The other side has lost, and lost big.

—Jacob Neusner

Principalities & Powers

by Samuel Francis

After centuries of delusion that white people ever accomplished anything worth doing, Euro-Americans are finally learning to grapple with just how worthless they really are. Last November, a conference of the Brahmins of "Afrocentrism" in Atlanta devoted all of a weekend to expounding the much-trumpeted insights that it was really

Africans who built the pyramids, invented philosophy and mathematics, discovered America, and founded Judaism and Christianity (both Moses and Jesus were "African-Americans," you see).

Not only the first human beings but also the first languages were African, too, and so were Egyptians Nefertiti and King Tut, the largely Macedonian Cleopatra, and even the Greek slave Aesop, who, as far as I know, has never

before been claimed by much of anyone except Walt Disney.

The world gapes in wonder at these revelations, before which the technology of space travel and TV dinners shrinks (both of these also were probably African in origin). Meanwhile, African-American civilization continues to outpace the brutish Euros. Last October 2 Live Crew won vindication in the courts for its garbage-box rap lyrics when its white lawyers argued that the