

cle the globe crashed on takeoff. Sure enough, there were no injuries.

- The first official hymnal of the new Presbyterian Church (USA) has eliminated "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen" from its pages. According to revision committee chairman Miss Melva Costen, the carol "has some sexist tones." House Republicans have asked Rep. Buz Lukens, the merry gentleman

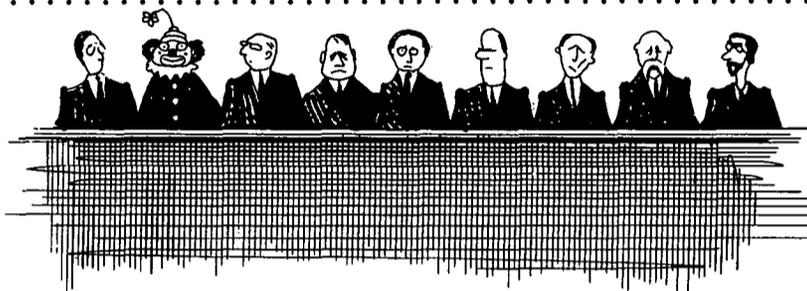
from Ohio, to resign his congressional seat. Not to be outdone, three Democratic congressmen have asked the House ethics committee to review allegations of sexual misconduct by Illinois Democrat Gus Savage. On July 6, President Bush inexplicably awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom to one-time State Department professional George F. Kennan, and on July 12, Dr.

Sidney Hook, who was honored with a Medal of Freedom by President Reagan in 1985, died in Stanford, California. He was 86, and irreplaceable.

- As Americans of all stripes continued to debate whether to fly or fry the flag, they got no help from Miss Cynthia F. Behrman of Hilliard, Ohio. On turning to her 1940 Girl Scout Handbook for guidance, under the

heading "Respect Due the Flag" she found this: "An old, torn, or soiled flag should not be thrown away, but should be destroyed as a whole, preferably by burning." In Tacoma, Washington, retired Brig. Gen. Ensley M. Llewellyn, founder of the military newspaper *Stars and Stripes*, died at 83. Needless to say, I have no idea whether he will be cremated. —WP

SPECIAL EDITORIAL



FLAG FLAP

by Victor Gold

AMENDMENT XXXVIII

Notwithstanding the provisions of Article II of the amendments hereof regarding the necessity of a well-regulated militia, the sale or commercial transfer of firearms and ammunition for private use in the United States and all territories subject to its jurisdiction is hereby prohibited.

—U.S. constitutional amendment enacted June 30, 1997, following a conservative Supreme Court decision restricting gun regulation laws in New York and Massachusetts.

Coming of political age in Louisiana, I soon learned the value of constitutional amendments. Like paper currency in Brazil, they were a glut on the market. On any given election day there would be a constitutional referendum on the ballot, adding anywhere from five to fifteen new amendments to the fundamental law of the state.

By the time I was twenty-one, the Louisiana constitution was as wordy (and as opaque) as an unedited Faulkner manuscript. Too many amendments, not to mention amendments-of-amendments. Then someone—probably a law clerk who had worked up a hernia trying to lift it—suggested throwing out the old constitution and starting all over again: the equivalent of invalidating old currency and printing new bills.

No use. Within a matter of years the new Louisiana constitution was as cluttered as the old. Not that Louisianans are that much different from citizens of other jurisdictions. State constitutions are generally treated with awesome irreverence, with this morning's peeve or passion likely to become

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this afternoon's amendment. The question serious conservatives have to ask themselves now is whether, given a growing irreverence toward the document shaped by the Founding Fathers, the constitutional inflation endemic to the states won't soon infect our national body politic.

Consider the proposed anti-flag burning amendment. It's all very simple, said the Attorney General on a Sunday talk show. No problem, no sweat. True, Madison, Hamilton, and the crowd gathered in Philadelphia 200 years ago spent weeks and months pondering, weighing each word and phrase that would become the law of the land. But then, you see, they didn't have the benefit of word processors. These days, a select group of constitutional experts from Capitol Hill and the Justice Department can print out, within forty-eight hours of an unpopular Supreme Court decision, an amendment to cool the crowd's flaming viscera. Who needs *The Federalist Papers* when the whole simple add-on can be explained by the Attorney General himself, between commercial bites, on "Meet the Press"?

All very good, but suppose—a not unlikely supposition—that the exhibitionist dolt who started the process at the '84 Republican convention in Dallas, having triggered one constitutional amendment, decides to "desecrate" another banner; is arrested under the new Texas statute following enactment of the twenty-seventh amendment; then freed when it's discovered that what he burned this time around wasn't an official U.S. flag but a look-alike banner containing fifty-three stars and fifteen stripes? Then we can suppose—another likely supposition, given the new ir-

reverence toward the Constitution—that it's a simple matter of plugging the loophole with another amendment to ban the physical destruction of simulated symbols.

There is, of course, a simpler way—the old-fashioned way that conservatives who claim to venerate the Founding Fathers might ponder before rushing to the nearest word processor to save the flag. The Supreme Court's ruling, after all, was narrowly rendered, 5-to-4. A one-vote switch is all that's needed, and barring the possibility that the flag-burning deci-

sion will send the country up in flames in the next few years, it's worth the wait.

Otherwise, prepare yourself, should the Attorney General's "simple" amendment become the law of the land, for more of the same. Much, much more, like paper currency in Brazil. A thirty-eighth amendment, sponsored by a liberal White House after a decision handed down by a conservative Court in the 1990s? Why not? In the flush of recent victories, conservatives would do well to consider that most fundamental principle of all political principles in a democracy: what goes around comes around. □

SIDNEY HOOK, RIP

Sidney Hook's death at the Sage of 86 reminds us all that not even the bravest heart or the staunchest spirit is indestructible. A man of profound learning and unflagging courage, Sidney Hook was a tireless champion of democracy, human rights, and the life of the mind. Though he entitled his autobiography *Out of Step*, and though he was indeed frequently out of step with prevailing academic and philosophical fashions, Sidney Hook was never out of step with the enduring values of the Western tradition: with love of

freedom, with pursuit of knowledge and respect for human dignity. He was a philosopher with the temperament of a fighter, and an academic with the vision of a statesman. "Man's vocation," he said, "should be the use of the arts of intelligence in behalf of human freedom." It is hard to believe—and even harder to accept—that his voice will not be heard again. But it will be remembered as long as men love freedom and respect human dignity.

—Vice President Dan Quayle
July 14, 1989

EDITORIALS



THE REAL ENVIRONMENTALIST

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

One of the curiosities of the American environmental movement is that so few environmentalists look particularly suited for the great outdoors. Most look as though they would be more at home in the public library or listening to a lecture on the porcelain of Byzantium, assuming Byzantium possessed porcelain. Of course, occasionally the paradigmatic American environmentalist picks up his butterfly net or straps on his walking shoes and heads toward the wilds of a nearby botanical garden or public forest preserve. More frequently when the environmentalist ventures out of doors he is headed for a demonstration alfresco against some aspect of the twentieth century.

Well, I am all for protesting the twentieth century, the classical fashions of the eighteenth century being more to my liking. What is more, some of this century's encroachments upon the natural order have, indeed, been catastrophic. Yet the true American environmentalist is not the aforementioned urban sophisticate with a tendency toward nerdiness. If sheer numbers matter, if monies spent to protect the natural habitat are considered, the true American environmentalist is the hunter, the fisherman, the outdoorsman. His devotion to nature, even to the creatures he pursues, is genuine. He ventures into the great outdoors eagerly, rain or shine—and even into those purlieus where nasty insects and unappealing reptiles swarm.

It surprised me not at all this spring when President George Bush placed environmental concerns near the top of his political agenda. He is a member of Ducks Unlimited and Bass Unlimited, too. Since Ducks Unlimited was founded in 1937, it has raised \$337 million for the maintenance and reclamation of some 3,000 wetlands projects. Wetlands, the home of thousands of species of wildlife, are under constant assault, usually from agricultural in-

terests. America loses 400,000 acres of wetlands annually. Such private organizations as Ducks Unlimited willingly pick up the bill to protect as many natural habitats as they can. Some of these organizations are quaintly named, for instance: the Ruffed Grouse Society, the National Wild Turkey Federation, and the White Tail Deer Foundation. All told, their membership far surpasses that of the more radical and politicized environmentalist organizations.

Few Americans have a deeper respect for the environment than the hunter or the pursuer of trout, bass, and less esculent fish. Some of the most inspired laudations penned to nature have been written by devotees of the hunt and the deep. Recall if you will the writings of one of the country's first and most effective conservationists, Theodore Roosevelt, a Republican. Most outdoorsmen recognize the true beauty of nature and the wonder of the creatures they pursue. The hunter and the fisherman have an abiding interest in keeping the environment unpolluted and congenial to their quarry. And they spend an enormous amount to preserve the environment both through voluntary contributions and through excise taxes and licenses.

The data available on America's outdoorsmen provide overwhelming evidence that when we think of the Amer-



ican environmentalist we should be thinking of hunters and fishermen. The *National Hunting and Fishing Survey*, published at five-year intervals by the Fish and Wildlife Service of the federal government, reveals that in 1985 more than 50 million sportsmen went afield with rod or gun. Just over 46 million fishermen, 16 years old or older, spent 976.6 million days and \$28.1 billion on their sport in 1985. That same year 16.7 million hunters spent 334 million days hunting and \$10.1 billion on the hunt. In 1985, 29,673,190 fishing licenses and 15,879,572 hunting licenses were purchased, raising respectively \$282,342,746

and \$300,760,758 for state governments' wildlife management.

In the 1950s federal excise taxes were levied on fishing and hunting equipment, raising still more money for wildlife management. Yet when similar legislation was aimed not long ago at the butterfly nets, the binoculars, and the other equipment of nonhunting and nonfishing environmentalists, they raised a ruckus of fearful proportions. This summer, as you swat flies and evade the poison ivy, remember the outdoorsman. He really relishes the environment and has willingly paid to keep it natural. □

BUSH AND THE CONSERVATIVES

George Herbert Walker Bush is the paradigmatic American of the present moment. That has now been made clear. We see it in his presidential decisions, his style, his holiday amusements in faraway Kennebunkport. He is upright, energetic, can-do. A man of character, possessed of the instincts of a fine officer, he is ceaseless movement, carefully scheduled. His government is going to be what the Europeans would call center right.

Where precisely that will lead us then depends on the right. After all, the center cannot lead. It merely absorbs. But today's right is not exactly poised to lead.

For one thing, the conservatives' most popular positions have already been implemented and to good effect. The Reagan Administration lowered marginal tax rates, and the economy flourished; though critics of the Reagan Boom have always reported on that Boom as though it were a weird Depression—for the better off, dancing in the streets; for the poor, Depression. Actually, as economist Martin Anderson notes, from 1980 to 1987 the Reagan Boom allowed an 84 percent increase in social welfare spending, America's largest increase in social welfare spending ever. The critics have also murmured in one sustained *concerto grosso* of gloom about the conser-

vatives' other popular program, the military buildup, though it accomplished precisely its purpose, an end to Soviet expansionism.

As for those conservative policies that have yet to be implemented, it is not clear there is a sufficient constituency supporting them or a galvanizing leader capable of creating that support. Controlling the federal budget, pressing for democracy in Nicaragua, legislation to sustain the traditional family, and continuation of the Strategic Defense Initiative are all dear to the hearts of conservatives, but all need leadership; and here the unhappy news is that the conservative leaders are either dead or exhausted from the struggles of the past fifteen years. That splendid generation of conservatives that numbered within its ranks William Casey, Barry Goldwater, Clare Boothe Luce, and Ronald Reagan himself has passed into retirement. Those conservatives in their sixties who popularized the views of conservative economists, social scientists, and strategic thinkers are weary. Is there a younger William F. Buckley, Jr. or Irving Kristol around? I do not know of one.

And there is worse news. The rallying points for American conservatism have always been personal liberty and anti-Communism. Rightly or wrongly in this age of Communist self-doubt and re-

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