

But Soft

By Charles Goyette



*As, in a theatre,
The lights are extinguished, for the
scene to be changed
With a hollow rumble of wings, with
a movement of darkness on dark-
ness,
And we know that the hills and the
trees, the distant panorama
And the bold imposing facade are all
being rolled away—
— T.S. Eliot*

Too long! Weary now; even seat-squirming, the audience anticipates the election, anxious for the next act in American life, hoping it brings catharsis, redemption, change.

But soft, for the fool still struts his hour upon the stage.

The curtain cannot fall on the Bush years soon enough. The sheer destruction has been unbearable for those with healthy human consciousness. We have witnessed the invasion of two countries -- and the silent, smirking nod given to the invasion of a third - leaving cities leveled, towns wasted, and lives lost in uncoun- ted thousands. The economic price we will pay is only just becoming visible through the rising smoke and ash, while eight years of power-lust and lawlessness have left our hard-won human liberties buried beneath the rubble. The scene demands the lonely sound of a cello as we survey the desolation: "Madness! ... Madness!"

A tale told by idiots? To be sure! Else why would the ideologues have destroyed the political vehicle they rode to power? Yet modern American

conservatism, whose faithful, like poor players, had mindlessly mouthed empty lines about fiscal responsibility, limited government and respect for the Constitution, will now not be pieced back together. But for idiocy, why would the worshippers of nothing so much as military might have displayed their ultimate impotence? Only idiocy explains why the plunderers, utterly dependent on the productive, have wasted their hosts so completely. Surely the act is complete? We, the unwilling spectators, hold our breath, longing for release. Enough! Let the curtain fall! Get on with it!

But soft!

For this is the America that worships commander guys and destroyer gods! This is the age of the Hollywood blockbuster! Enough is never enough! The frenzy of destruction is never complete. There is always another car-truck-bus chase to end in a twisted pile of carnage ahead, another helicopter to crash, another train to wreck. More falling debris to crush fleeing bit players... high altitude bombardment, a thermonuclear explosion, an asteroid if need be! Whatever it takes to

top that which has gone before and pierce the American theater-goers' dull sensitivity, that his delight in destruction might be made complete.

Those wise in the ways of theater, recognize the device: the mournful cello's remorse signals the end of the act only to deceive, that we might let our guard down, heightening the surprise of the next thunderous shock.

And life imitates art. Busying themselves, the stagehands of this production, the enabling talking heads and public nuisances, raise a great sound and much fury about the acts to come.

But soft!

We, distrustful of power-wielders and world-shapers, recognize the device! Will the hapless audience exhale now, anticipating the act yet to come, even as the clown prince remains on the stage, his last lines yet unspoken, his final deeds unfinished?

To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow:

Iran!

Judge Buttrick to Stand for Reelection

By Ernest Hancock

April 2, 2007

Arizona Superior Court Judge John A. Buttrick announced today that he will seek election to a second full four year term this November.

As a general jurisdiction judge, Buttrick is believed to be the highest elected registered Libertarian official in the country. He was originally appointed to the Superior Court in Maricopa County (the greater Phoenix/Scottsdale metropolitan area) in May 2001 by Republican Governor Jane Hull. In 2004 Buttrick ran for a



full term in a retention election. He received an almost 74 percent "yes" vote in that election, garnering well over 403,000 votes.

"I am confident that I can be retained by popular vote once again," Buttrick said. "Some people said that I could never be appointed Judge after having run as a Libertarian for Governor in 1994 and State House of Representatives in 1998. Similarly, others said that my well known Libertarian Party membership would hurt me in the retention election in 2004. They were all wrong. Governor Hull appointed me over 39 Republicans and Democrats and my vote total in 2004 was among the highest in the state. In fact, I received more votes in Maricopa County alone than the Libertarian Presidential nominee received in the entire country. Since 2004 I have

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served on criminal, family court and civil assignments and I believe that, if anything, my performance in those positions will lead to an increase in my vote totals."

Besides running for elective office as a Libertarian, Buttrick also was as an at-large member of the Libertarian National Committee from 1997 to 2000 and served on the national LP Platform Committee three times, including chairing the Committee in 1998 and 2000. He has addressed LP national convention delegates in 2002 and 2006 as well as other libertarian and civic groups, but is presently forbidden by judicial ethical rules from endorsing any political organization or candidate.

"Those rules are certainly restrictive, but I enjoy the job so much that it

has not dulled my desire to continue as a judge, at least until my next four year term expires. Beyond that I have no specific plans." Because of family commitments, Buttrick will not be attending the Denver convention. "I wish all my old friends well. I'll be watching all the action on CSPAN."

As in 2004, Buttrick is seeking no funds for his campaign. An independent Judicial Performance Review will evaluate his qualifications based on surveys of lawyers, litigants, witnesses and jurors. The result of that review will be made available to all voters and should serve to adequately inform them in advance of the election. If not, Buttrick will mount a self-funded campaign. "There are more important campaigns for people to support with their dollars and time," Buttrick stated. "I'm sure you know which ones those are."

For additional information call Judge Buttrick at 602-506-0971.

Celebrating Genuine Freedom on the Fourth of July

By Jacob G. Hornberger

Ever since the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, celebrations on the Fourth of July have brought forth pronouncements that U.S. troops in Iraq are defending the freedoms expressed in the Declaration of Independence. But nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, most of the "freedoms" that Americans are celebrating today are antithetical to the genuine principles of freedom enunciated in the Declaration.

There is no better way to demon-

strate this than by contrasting the freedoms that Americans in, say, 1880 were celebrating on the Fourth of July with those "freedoms" that Americans celebrate today.

In 1880 America, there was no income taxation, Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, welfare, public (i.e., government) schools, drug laws, gun control, immigration controls, foreign wars, or foreign aid. Economic regulations were few.

That is what it once meant to be an American. That is what it once meant to be free.

In the hearts and minds of our American ancestors, freedom included the natural or God-given right

to sustain one's life through labor and through economic exchanges made with others. Americans would have scoffed at the notion of asking the state's permission to engage in an occupation or profession or having the state interfere with mutually beneficial exchanges.

Taxes on income were considered an anathema because freedom entailed a person's right to keep the fruits of his earnings and, in fact, to accumulate unlimited amounts of wealth. Social Security, Medicare, and other social welfare programs were opposed because freedom entailed the right to do whatever a person wanted with his own money. For that matter, charity meant nothing in terms of virtue or morality if it resulted from the coercive apparatus of the state.

The freedom celebrated on July 4, 1880, entailed a person's right to live his life any way he chose — responsibly or irresponsibly, healthy or unhealthy — so long as his conduct was peaceful. Drug laws were nonexistent because freedom entailed the unfettered right to ingest harmful or unhealthy substances.

Unfortunately, in our time Americans have rejected our ancestors' philosophy of freedom in favor of a "freedom" in which the state's primary role is a paternalistic one. Today, the "freedom" celebrated is the collective power of the state to take care of people in society by taxing them. On the Fourth of July, 2008, Americans

Hornberger Continued on Page 15