

# Big brother is still out there

Does increasing social control in the Old World portend a similar fate for freedom in America?

A major thesis of libertarians is that economic freedom and social freedom are inextricable. The argument goes like this: economic regulation gives government more and more control over our lives. As government bureaucrats gain power over us, they will be tempted to restrict our freedom for "the public good" or their own



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personal agendas. In such an environment freedom of expression, religion, and use of property become endangered.

History has given libertarians powerful evidence for this view. The countries of Soviet Russia and Communist China detail the social side-effects of a state controlled economy. In both countries religion was stamped out, ideological opposition was a crime, and citizens were treated as slaves to the state. The state controlled where you lived, where you worked, what you read, whether or not you got medical attention, and even whether you lived or died. China has a sordid history of state-forced abortions, and Russia of brutal labor camps. This is despite the fact that the Soviet constitution had some nice-sounding guarantees of social freedom and that both governments claimed to work for the "public good".

From these examples it would appear that there can be no social freedom where there is no economic freedom. A citizen without private property cannot expect liberty for long.

Until now, leftists who hunger for a controlled economy partnered with social freedom have had a powerful counter-example to point to: the socialist welfare-states of Europe. In these, it would appear that the state has mastered the art of dominating each citizen's economic life while leaving them free to pursue any social life-style they sought. Despite high taxes, large amounts of state-owned property, and intense regulation of private property, citizens have been guaranteed such American rights as freedom of religion, speech, and assembly. Such states are a leftist's dream.

Unfortunately for the leftist, recent developments show that this may be nothing more than a passing dream. In France, the most socialist state in a socialist continent, we may well be witnessing the slow evolution of a new police state as government officials clamp down on social freedom for the "public good." Particularly ominous is a recent decision to ban all "conspicuous" religious symbols from the nation's schools. The law is aimed primarily at Muslim headscarves, but it will also affect pagan symbols, Jewish stars, Hindu symbols, and Christian crosses.

I respect the right of my religious peers to express themselves freely as long as I am allowed to do the same. In a state where the public good trumps individual rights, there can be no guarantee of such freedom.

Right now France is only banning religious expression in schools. But in a country where the bureaucrats have such power, it would be foolish to count on their good will to stop them from exercising it further. What fun is absolute control over your citizenry if you can't exercise it?

Indeed as socialism spreads, freedom of religion must be curtailed even further. France, like America, adheres to the principle of separation of church and government for good reason. However, as schools, businesses, land, television stations, radio stations, and printing presses come more and more under the control, ownership, and regulation of government, religion forcedly becomes "separated" from a greater portion of our lives.

Americans should be careful that we do not follow the example of Europe. This is a real danger, as political trends in America seem to follow a few decades behind those of the old world. Already, we have seen the curtailment of religious freedom in schools and public universities at a local level, as teachers and students are censured for expressing their religious faith (to be outraged, read the home page of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education).

Americans should resist the loss of our heritage of freedom.

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# Parking snafu demands explanation

Disparity between spaces and permits must be addressed.

Parking is a joke. Parking is a cash cow. Parking is a million dollars in yearly revenue.

Last semester I worked with seven other seniors who were

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fed up with parking and wanted change. I have an on-campus commuting decal and I'm not reacting to some ticket I just got. This is a problem that I've seen in four years and I want something done about it. In one semester we found out more about parking than any student or administrator.

We talked with Dean Harold Holmes, trying to get parking information, which he told us he didn't have, only to find out that he is the Chairman of the Reynolda Traffic Commission (RTC). We tried to talk with University Police Chief Regina Lawson and were turned away, also told by her office that she didn't know about parking (also a member of the RTC). Parking Management told us they didn't keep statistics on parking. Finally we met with Vice President of student Life and Instructional Resources Ken Zick who supplied us with parking space and decal statistics. On Nov. 17, 2003 we met with the RTC. At this meeting we were told that the RTC sets University policy on parking without any idea of how many parking spaces exist or decals are issued! The decision to move upper-class and graduate commuting students to off-campus lots this year was made without any data to support the move!

Simply put, the parking plan is based on a margin system. There aren't enough parking spaces for everyone to park at once, but there should be enough parking spaces for everyone who wants one on an average day. The RTC had NO idea what the margin was when it set parking policy. Most astonishing is the faculty "margin." There are 500 more faculty spaces than decals while there are more than 1,000 fewer student spaces than decals! Although there are only 3 students (1 undergrad, 2 grad) to 9 faculty/staff on the RTC, we never heard any complaints that the student voice was being drowned out. Karl Brady is the current undergraduate representative to the RTC. The two graduate students are Brian Grimberg (MBA) and Scott Bayzle (Law).

In 1996-97 the University collected \$270,000 in parking fines from fewer students than are enrolled today. Vice President John Anderson has since set a policy to no longer release parking fine information. He also approves financing for new parking lots. Since the 1998-99 school year, parking registration costs have soared at two and three times the rate of housing and tuition

(respectively). In 2002-03 the University collected \$743,000 in registration fees, in 2004-05 it will be almost \$930,000.

Parking solutions are hard to come by. We could pave the Quad, but all of the spots would probably go to faculty. Opening a visitor lot late at night doesn't change the problem during classes. Even with the new satellite lots there is still a 1,000-space shortage. In November of 2002 John Anderson approved and funded a plan to move all of the freshmen off campus to satellite lots on Polo Road. This would represent almost 400 more on-campus spaces for upperclassmen and graduate students; however it lost funding last school year and remains in limbo. Part of this project is the recently cleared lot at the corner of Polo Road and Long Drive which remains empty, but unpaved, despite a shortage of on-campus spaces! Faculty lots could be gated for \$15,000 each and the additional 500 faculty spots opened to students! There are dozens of solutions and no one is even trying to understand the problem, much less suggest possible improvements!

Finally, no discussion of parking on campus is complete without

talking about our student leaders. Although I won't say that having a faculty pass has made them more complacent, the Student Government president, the student trustee, and the editor in chief of the *Old Gold and Black* and the *Howler* all enjoy a faculty parking pass as perks of their job. Certainly not bribes, but these are the people who can create change in parking on campus and with faculty parking passes they do not have the same incentive as others.

A small group of dedicated seniors with no possible personal gain found all this in a few months. The administration uses scare tactics to intimidate faculty and students into thinking parking improvements are a lost cause, including inflated costs of up to \$32 million for parking decks. The Administration talks about how much better parking is here than other places. At UNC the same registration fee gets you a guaranteed parking spot in a gated lot. And their system is run by their SG. So, make sure your student leaders are representing you and not just repeating the administration's sound byte.

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## A look at the numbers: Parking Decals versus Spaces in 2003-04

Spring 2003 Margin	Spring 2003 Decals	2003-04 Spaces	Float/Margin
Commuter On-Campus	1815	484	-1331
Commuter Satellite Lot	229	417	188
Resident On-Campus	1995	2169	174
Resident (Student Drive)	332	245	-87
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4371</b>	<b>3315</b>	<b>-1056</b>



# The dangers of placating the American people

Conveniently placing the blame for Sept. 11 lulls well-founded fears.

Richard Clarke annoys me. Somehow, out of a *60 Minutes* interview and his newly published book, he will make money because of others' suffering. He has become somewhat of a fascination

But what annoys me most about Richard Clarke is not solely his assured profitability from this national chicanery, but how this profiteering stems from several of his own failures and the failures of others. As of now, there is no substantive record that Clarke was a whistleblower during either the Clinton or Bush II administrations, pointing out the dangers of Al-Qaeda at every turn. Discrepancies in Mr. Clarke's actions abound - where was this profound conscientious objection two years ago in the wake of Sept. 11? Why are testimonies, emails, and reports surfacing that facially contradict many of the claims Clarke purports to make today? Furthermore, why was nine months of the Bush administration expected to eliminate Al-Qaeda when Clinton couldn't do it in eight years?

Clarke has made a mockery of a supremely important commission investigation as to the circumstances which allowed Sept. 11 to happen.

I couldn't help but think that he was in some way appeasing the American people, giving them a sound bite that they desperately wanted to hear.

Honest testimony is needed to assure correct findings. America should not tolerate self-serving publicity stunts.

Even in my dismay for Mr. Clarke, his actions have made us think about the prevailing trend in American politics: anything and everything that goes wrong must have someone to blame, but it wasn't me. Whether or not you had anything to do with plausible blame, it is fashionable to distance yourself from said blame and relinquish any responsibility you may have had over said wrongful action. It's almost like watching kids approach a haunted house at night - the door barely creaks and everyone runs away.

Obviously, such pathetic excuses for diminishing personal responsibility help no one, especially when the issue is paramount, i.e. the security of the American people. It is clear that our intelligence failures prior to Sept. 11 in large part are attributable to poor quality intelligence, an agency that lacks enough Arab-speaking informants, and a Cold War mindset that has yet to be changed.

Our Cold War intelligence was great in spying on nation-states, principally the Soviet Union. The enemy was geographically and ideologically defined. An intelligence system based on those principles will always be weaker than an enemy that increasingly spans the globe and is willing to sacrifice their own lives.

Yet as Mr. Clarke dealt blame around like a deck of cards, I couldn't help but think that he was in some way appeasing the American people, giving them a sound bite that they desperately wanted to hear. The

American people want to be reassured that someone or something was in fact to blame for this horrible tragedy.

What America in this age will never be able to fathom is the possibility that no matter what American intelligence and law enforcement did, Sept. 11 was inevitable. We could never believe that Al-Qaeda outsmarted us at our own game. The blame game perpetuated by Mr. Clarke helps us cope with the fact that maybe, just maybe, our own resources were no fight for Al-Qaeda, and that there is no blame to distribute.

America will never believe in its own fallibility. The ease with which we live our daily lives would be interrupted, the fear we have conquered since Sept. 11 would return. For if the United States is merely mortal, there is no one to blame. And that is something with which America cannot live.

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on the American stage simply because he seemingly has all the answers as to who is to blame for Sept. 11. We need someone to blame; this wasn't supposed to happen to America, the impregnable fortress.