

All hail the...

...the par-boiled issue ...

Hepper Spray Times

April 2008



It's fagaceous... it's free...if you can find it

"...they do plot unlikely wonders..."*

Vol. X No. 4

99 of every 100 Americans are **not** in jail



Embarrassed Justice Department Officials Search for Explanation

By Joshua Pinion

A new report documenting America's rank as the world's number one incarcerator also reveals that 99 out of every 100 Americans are wandering the streets without benefit of handcuffs, prison bars, or the helpful supervision of prison guards.

Using state-by-state data, the report says 2,319,258 Americans were in jail or prison at the start of 2008, a statistic which marks the United States as having more of its own citizens in jail than any other nation, but which leaves a remarkable number of Americans on the streets to fend for themselves.

"It's frightening," stated a spokesperson for the Pew Center on

the States, which reported on the fact that 50 states spent more than \$49 billion on corrections last year.

"The states are spending all they can, but there are still citizens unaccountably outside prison walls despite all the states' best efforts."

Critics argued that it was shameful that the rate of increase for prison costs was six times greater than for higher education spending, but were dismissed by correctional facilities' experts.

"Prison is educational, too," explained one expert. "We have classes in sexually transmitted diseases, for instance."

Criminologists agreed that prison

inmates participate in a highly evolved hierarchy of societal requirements and customs distinct from those found outside prison walls which at least prepare them well for gang life when they are finally released.

"There is no question as to their expertise in gang language, gang symbolism, and gang rituals," marveled one criminologist. "We hire them to explain it to us."

The soaring cost of prison is saddling cash-strapped states with heavy financial burdens, but experts agree that citizens will be safer when more of them are in jail.

"One in a hundred is a good start," stated one correctional facility director. "But we can do better."

* * * * *

BIRGENEAU ASKS PANHANDLERS FOR FUNDRAISING HELP

By Izzy Getnit

"They're just better at it," conceded UC Berkeley Chancellor Robert Birgeneau at a recent Board of Regents meeting explaining his latest effort to raise money for financial aid.

A recent study confirms that the annual cost of of an undergraduate education will double from the current cost of \$25,000 within a few years.

An education on a UC campus was free until Governor Ronald Reagan decided to institute "registration fees" which, as they skyrocket, pose no problem for the wealthy, but apparently are described as a hardship by the whiny group with challenged portfolios which believes for some reason that the less financially fortunate should have an equal chance at an education.

"They have a lot in common with panhandlers anyway," stated Birgeneau of the lower income students. "They probably have fewer investments and probably don't know their way around a wine list."

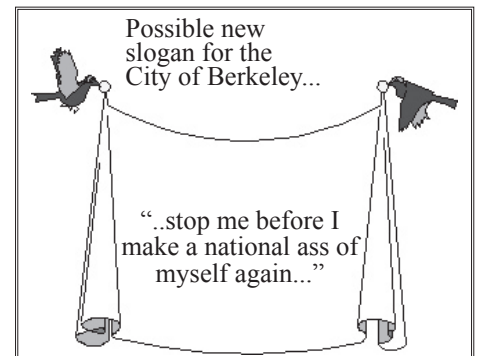
"We're glad to help," commented a local panhandler. "Raising money on the street is hard work, but apparently the regents, for all their millions, are hitting their wall."

"That's right," added another panhandler. "Our contribution may be small, but it's a larger percentage of our take, and it's from the heart. Believe me, the streets are quite an education."

* * * * *



FEDERAL INVESTIGATORS are working to make sure billboard alteration becomes a violation of the Patriot Act, so incidents of this kind will never happen again.



ASK THE EXPERTS



LENA DEETER knows the answers to everything forwards and backwards.

Dear Lena, I thought the war was supposed to be good for the economy, but I just lost my job. What's going on here?

Dear reader, yours is an understandable confusion. Your having lost your job is obscuring your perspective on the big picture. If you were a stockholder in an oil company, I assure you, you would see that the future is very bright.

Dear Lena, I'm trying to follow these stories on the economy, but it seems like a simple rumor can blow through the media and cost someone millions. It's obvious that the dollar is no longer stable, but isn't anything stable?

Dear reader, you are correct that the economy is actually a shy maiden who curls up with a good book at the least sign of insecurity. The book she is reading, however, is quite stable, and will rarely lose its value.

Dear Lena, these anti-war marches may be important, but they are so tedious and exhausting. Isn't there a better way to register my disagreement with policy?

Dear reader, I couldn't agree more. There's nothing more annoying than finding yourself next to the person with the bullhorn who hasn't figured out that they don't have to shout into it to be heard. You could try voting, or writing a letter to your representatives, but it sounds like that would probably be much, much harder for you, so I suggest shouting at the television, which is at least a good breathing and vocal exercise.

Ask Lena for an entertaining economic forecast at cdenney@igc.org.

HELPING THE INDIFFERENT RICH WHO WON'T HELP THEMSELVES

C. W. Nevius Recommends Government Intervention for Helpless Rich

By Guest Columnist C. W. Nevius



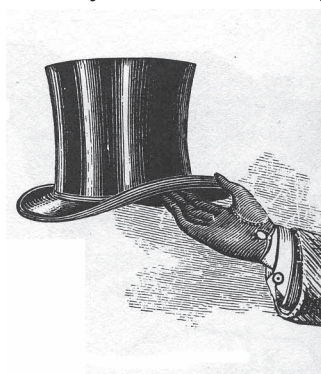
C.W. Nevius
On San Francisco

Last Friday a man marched down Market Street in a \$4,000 suit and refused to give a dime to the two panhandlers who politely asked him for help. A few days before that, a wealthy man died leaving nothing to charity.

There can be debates about how to handle the middle class when they express anxiety about how much to give the poor, but no compassionate person, or city, can stand aside and abandon those who cannot find compassion in themselves.

"The frustration is that a lot of these people are literally sentenced to die indifferent," Mayor Gavin Newsom said. "I think we all agree that there are people on the street that are not going to change unless there is a dramatic interruption in their routine."

San Francisco is about to attempt to implement a policy that could get the severely indifferent wealthy and the in-



RICH PEOPLE often like having everything handed to them, and have no idea how annoying this is to the rest of the world.

transigent greedy into the kind of mandatory programs they need. As early as next month, Darius Kayhan, the city's homeless policy coordinator, expects to have his Outreach Teams identifying good candidates for mental health conservatorships.

Conservatorships are not new. The idea is to take individuals who are determined by the court to be "gravely disabled" by their indifference to the poor and put their affairs in the control of a legal conservator. The conservator



THESE RICH PEOPLE are actually victims of a system that robs them of their ability to experience compassion, and without government intervention they run the risk of openly walking the public streets in their embarrassing condition.

could require the individual to undergo treatment, take medications and even accept confinement in a mental health facility for up to a year.

"The rich often need intervention of this kind," agreed Anne Minton, director of Aging and Adult Services for the city. "San Francisco already has between 900 and 1,000 people in conservatorships – many of whom are elderly people who can't care for their own affairs. Rich people are just as disoriented, and seemingly unable to tell how much money is enough for one person."

Kayhan said he hopes to step up the use of the program in a way that could have a dramatic effect on life on the streets.

"Try to imagine if these rich people started to give a damn," he said. "Try to imagine a world where profit wasn't all that mattered, and healthcare and housing weren't just for the privileged. The homeless know which ones need help the most, and will prove invaluable in implementing this new program."

* * * * *

CONFIDENT SHOPPER FOUND



By Sheila B. Homesoon

Experts and media raced to get in line for a chance to interview the confident shopper found recently in a grocery store, hoping to get information which would help others learn to shop with assurance.

The shopper, a Mrs. Lula Fairbanks, apparently had no idea that the health of not just the American economy but the global economy as well was deeply dependent upon her willingness to pull out a slightly frayed change-purse and pick up some eggs and onions.

Fairbanks had difficulty maneuvering through the crowded market after



SHOPPERS' CONFIDENCE has a lot to do with not knowing what the hell a chart like this has to do with the real world.

news of her willingness to spend money spread through a news community hungry for good economic news.

"I was here last week," stated Fairbanks, "and there was none of this fuss."

News crews agreed that it was possible that Fairbanks was a government operative with instructions to spend money in an effort to calm economic fears, much like the Federal Reserve's willingness to shuffle ball-change and bail out Bear Stearns, but most economists agreed that Fairbanks' eggs and onions purchase took much more confidence than the Federal Reserve's maneuver.

"She doesn't have the ability to manipulate the interest rates, acquire failing institutions at bargain basement prices, or fool with the federal funds rate to marginalize her losses," agreed one expert. "I believe we are seeing true confidence."

Fairbanks reluctantly agreed to several interviews, but insisted that she saw no particular significance in her expenditure.

"We need eggs," she stated, "and I always pick up a few onions."

Experts plan to track Fairbanks during the next several weeks as the stock market's instability continues, in the hope that her movements reveal a new index on which they can base economic forecasts.

"Her confidence may have a pattern which can help others," stated one economist. "Possibly she can help other shoppers, but more probably she can help us rearrange our hedge funds."

Terror Watch List Full of Disney Characters

Officials Scramble to Help the Little Mermaid

By Fred O. Heights

A Justice Department audit has concluded that the FBI watch list used by security agencies is inaccurate, outdated, and full of Disney characters.

As a result, many innocent cartoon figures have stayed on the "Consolidated Terrorist Watchlist" long after they were cleared of any wrong-doing, injuring their careers and compromising their reservations for vacation time-shares in Europe.

The Terrorist Screening Center, which manages the list, cited several factors as contributing to the problem, including the sheer number of the FBI's of nominations, which had 3,417 nominations in 2005, 2,568 nominations in 2006, and at least 2,255 in 2007.

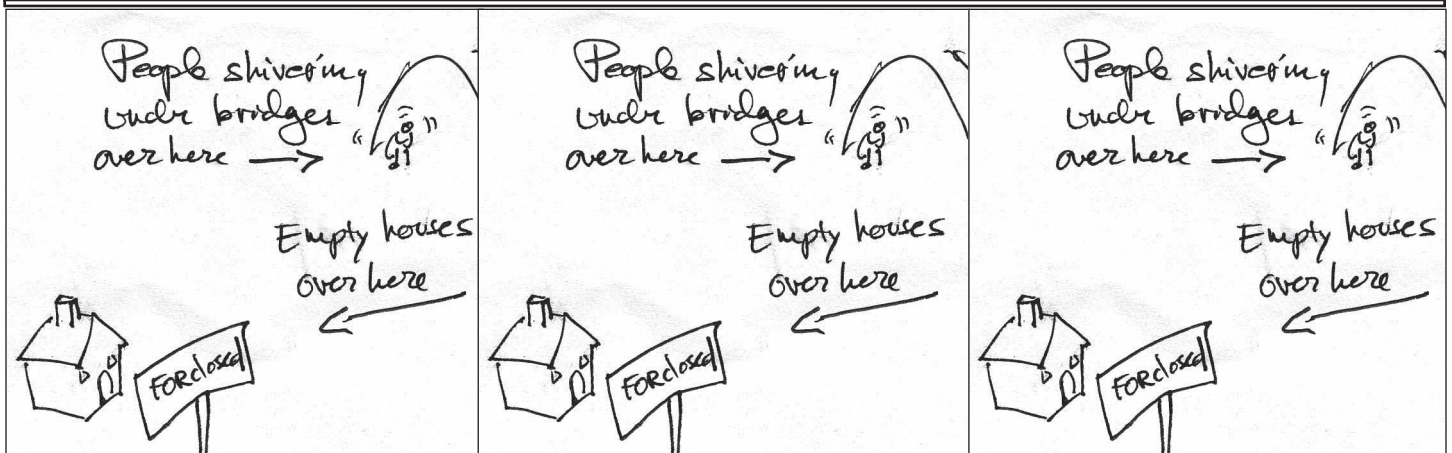
"The numbers are going down," pointed out Justice Department Inspector General Glenn Fine, "but we can't remove anyone from the list without a formal investigation, by which time the original list has circulated to other agencies and then circled back to us."

Critics argued that there ought to be a way to take the Little Mermaid off the terrorism watchlist, but Fine disagreed.

"We have the hardest time interviewing the cartoon characters," he said, "and we can't take any chances."



We Can't Draw Comics by Franz Toast



BAILING OUT Bear Stearns makes sense because they are really hurting.

LOSING YOUR HOME is hard, but it will build your character.

THE GOOD NEWS is now the homeless can buy Bear Stearns at \$2 a share.

MOTH DISPUTES WATCH LIST INCLUSION, DANGER TO PUBLIC

By Sarah Fim



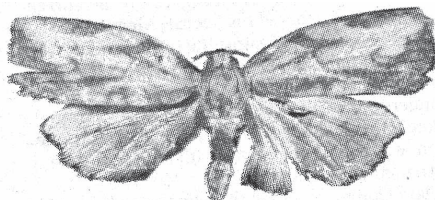
AGRIBUSINESSMAN STEWART RESNICK says his contributions to Governor Schwarzenegger's campaign have nothing to do with moths or pheromones or anything.

it was discovered that New Zealand has controlled its light brown apple moth population by the use of natural predators, and that the primary benefactor of the proposed pesticide spraying is Stewart Resnick, who owns the largest almond and citrus production companies in the United States and contributed generously to Schwarzenegger's

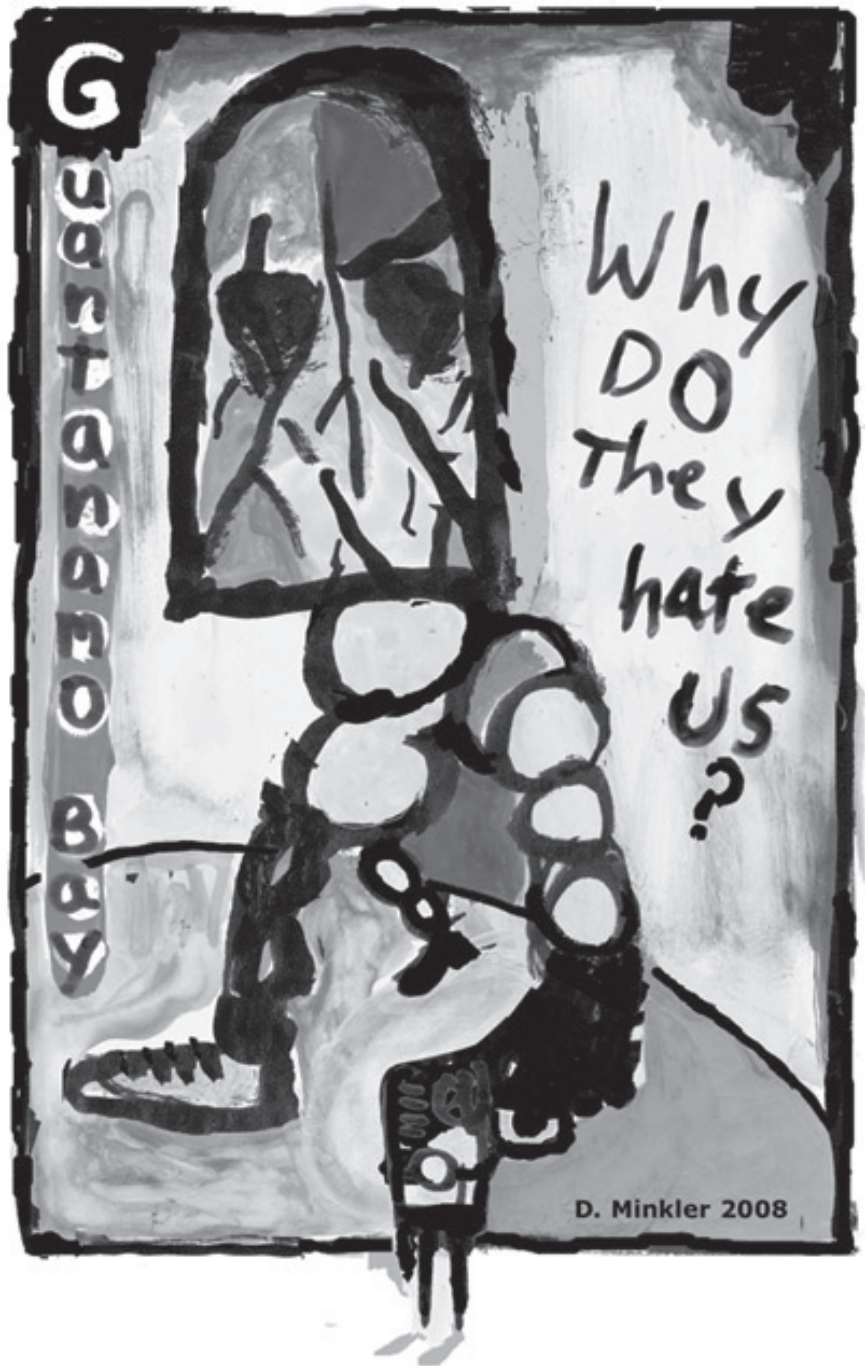
Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's election.

"What a coincidence," exclaimed Aaron McLearn, a Schwarzenegger spokesperson. "Arnold has remarked on it himself, actually. Resnick is just a really lucky guy."

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SPOKESMOTH FOR the light brown apple moth maintains that their group poses no danger to the public, which still insists that moths remove their shoes before boarding a plane.



Next Issue: Composting with Celebrities

The Pepper Spray Times gratefully accepts donations, death threats, mailing list additions, etc., at:



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Pepper Spray Times is made possible by the natural comedy inherent in the local political landscape and all its inhabitants, best exemplified by...



Available at some of the finest public meetings, or mailed to your door for a hefty bribe. Plagiarize wildly.

We appreciate those who understand that satire is serious business.

*King Richard II