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ECONOMICAL COGITATIONS

by Daniel B. Klein

Some folks are dissatisfied with free enterprise if it
doesn't work perfectly, and satisfied with government
if it works at all.

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Bribery must stop, you say? Tell it to Schindler.

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Affirmative Action: Counteracting prejudice by
providing a sound reason for it.

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When the circus of politics is finished the
groundskeeper sweeps the litter into a pile and calls
it "the law."

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The Political Dialectic of Twentieth Century America:
The Conservative believes the government should run
education, place a check on vice, fine tune the
economy, promote democracy abroad, and be led by a man
in pin stripes. His opponent the Liberal believes the
government should run education, place a check on vice,
fine tune the economy, promote democracy abroad, and be
led by a man in plaid.

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When the anti-capitalist holds profit-hungry business
in contempt, he conveniently neglects the fact that
business is the paid servant of customers and the
served payer of employees.

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The democratic faith in government comes in two varieties, the naive and the sophisticated. The naive democrat believes that if everyone would just be nice and participate, like in a town meeting, we can make it all work out. The sophisticated democrat recognizes the tender-minded folly of this view and is ready to face the tough truth: we must enlist qualified experts to make it all work out.

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The dirigiste intellectual takes experience with scribblings about a subject for experience with the subject itself.

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Is it the will to control that gives birth to the
pretense of knowing, or is it the will to know that
gives birth to the impulse to control?

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Wisdom in economics: refined knowledge of the
unknowableness of the economy.

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The dispute between two economists over whether or not
the labor market is competitive is usually a dispute
over the meaning of competition, just as the dispute
between two lovers over whether or not he loves her is
usually a dispute over the meaning of love.

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Some economists are a riddle. On an issue-by-issue
basis they are libertarian seven times out of ten, but

when you put it all together you get a Clinton supporter. The answer to this riddle often lies in conjugal consideration.

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Liberty is like black licorice: some people hate it and some people love it.

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The value of safeguarding a man's right to life against unjust force divided by the value of his life itself equals, on average, three hundred thousand.

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To work its wonders the principle of individual liberty need not be mythologized, but only upheld. But to be upheld it must be mythologized.

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The battle is not one between power and justice, nor between unjust power and just power. The battle is between unjust power and less unjust power.

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Clever leftists miss the point when they contend that the libertarian theory of individual liberty is "mere" mythology. The point is that it is a mythology worth consecrating.

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The government's war on smoking is getting so outrageous it is turning smokers into libertarians and libertarians into smokers.

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Good taste favors *laissez-faire* even for personal activities that show bad taste.

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Laws that prevent the choosing of sin also prevent the choosing of virtue.

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If we hold groups rather than individuals accountable, we all end up criminals.

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May the socialist enter private industry, and the libertarian, government.

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