

Contents:

Executive Vice President's Message	2
Scholars Honored	3
Campaign Laws Stifle Discourse	3
Message in the Media	4

Friends Salute Center	5
High Tech and Higher Ed .	5
High School Debate Workshops	6
Freedom Fighters Win Award	8

Running the Race to Win	8
Political Labels	9
Free-Market Library	11
Scholar Chosen to Save City	12

New Web Site Educates Users About Benefits of School Choice

For over a decade, the Mackinac Center for Public Policy has been Michigan's leading advocate of greater school choice for all Michigan families. Now the Center's education reform leadership role continues into the next century with the launch of a new web site devoted exclusively to school choice issues.

On Nov. 1, 2000, the Mackinac Center debuted **SchoolChoiceWorks.org**, an interactive Internet resource designed to provide cyber-citizens from Michigan and elsewhere with facts and analysis that show how expanded choice would provide superior opportunities for students by improving all schools. Less than one See **"Web site"** on page 4



Thousands of web users have already surfed over to www.SchoolChoiceWorks.org to access up-to-date research on how choice provides greater educational quality and opportunity for all children.

Teacher Educates Union about His Rights Uses Center Report to Re-Direct Dues to Charity

Rawland Storm did not want the fruits of his labor going to support his union's social agenda—an agenda that directly contradicted his religious beliefs. And after the Livonia public school teacher learned more about his rights from a recent Mackinac Center for Public Policy report, his

course of action became clear.

The report, *Religious Liberty and Compulsory Unionism: A Worker's Guide to Using Union Dues for Charity*, informed Storm about Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. Title VII allows union workers to re-direct their dues money to a charitable organization if

they hold a sincere religious objection to underwriting activities unrelated to their union's employee representation duties.

After seeking professional legal counsel from an independent teachers' organization, Storm contacted his union to request that an amount of money

See **"Rights"** on page 10

"With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed. Consequently he who moulds public sentiment, goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions. He makes statutes and decisions possible or impossible to be executed."

—Abraham Lincoln, 1858

Board of Directors

D. Joseph Olson, Chairman
Lawrence Reed, President

Richard Antonini
Peter Cook
Hon. Paul Gadola
Richard Haworth
Mara Letica
Edward Levy, Jr.

Rodney Lockwood, Jr.
Bruce Maguire, Jr.
Richard McLellan
James Rodney
Linda Shinkle

Board of Scholars

Dr. Donald Alexander
Western Michigan University

Annette Kirk
Russell Kirk Center for Cultural Renewal

Dr. John Attarian
Freelance Writer

Dr. Robert Kleiman
Oakland University

Dr. Thomas Bertonneau
Writer and Independent Scholar

Dr. Dale Matcheck
Northwood University

Dr. Peter Boettke
George Mason University

Dr. Paul McCracken
University of Michigan

Dr. John Bornhofen
Grand Valley State University

Dr. George Nastas III
Marketing Consultants

Dr. William Browne
Central Michigan University

Dr. John Pafford
Northwood University

Dr. Stephen Colarelli
Central Michigan University

Dr. Mark Perry
University of Michigan - Flint

Dr. Keith Crocker
University of Michigan

Dr. Karen Potter-Witter
Michigan State University

Robert Crowner
Eastern Michigan University

Gregory Rehmke
Foundation for Economic Education

Dr. Richard Cutler
Michigan Association of Scholars

Dr. Steve Safranek
Ave Maria School of Law

Robert Daddow
Oakland County Executive

Louis Schimmel, Jr.
Municipal Advisory Council of Michigan

Dr. Stephen Dresch
Jheon & Associates

James Sheehan
Competitive Enterprise Institute

Dr. Richard Ebeling
Hillsdale College

Rev. Robert Sirico
Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty

Dr. Jefferson Edgins
University of Kentucky

Dr. John Taylor
Wayne State University

Dr. Wayland Gardner
Western Michigan University

Prof. Harry Verseyer, Jr.
Walsh College

Dr. Dale Haywood
Northwood University

John Walter, Jr.
Dow Corning Corporation (ret.)

Dr. Michael Heberling
Baker College

Dr. William Wilson
Ernst & Young

Dr. Ormand Hook
Mecosta-Osceola Intermediate School District

Dr. Martin Wing
Kettering University

Prof. Harry Hutchison
University of Detroit Law School

Dr. Gary Wolfram
Hillsdale College

Dr. David Janda
Institute for Preventative Sports Medicine

IMPACT!

David Bardallis
Editor

Samuel Walker
Assistant Editor

Daniel Montgomery
Graphic Designer

IMPACT! is a quarterly publication of the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, a nonprofit, nonpartisan, tax-exempt research and educational organization classified under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code.

Mackinac Center for Public Policy
140 West Main Street
P.O. Box 568
Midland, Michigan 48640
(517) 631-0900 • Fax (517) 631-0964
www.mackinac.org • mcpp@mackinac.org

Must "Independent" Think Tanks Be Unprincipled?



Joseph Lehman
Executive Vice President

Americans use the word "independent" with a near-reverence that springs from our political history. The Declaration of Independence and its anniversary, Independence Day, are hallowed secular touchstones. Children are encouraged to become "independent." "Independent" thinkers are prized. "Independent" action is praised. Financial "independence" is sought. "Energy independence" slogans are mouthed by politicians. Our state welfare department was even renamed the Family Independence Agency. But "independent" is frequently misused when a journalist chooses a one-word label to describe policy research institutes.

Mackinac Center President Lawrence Reed's excellent essay on political labels (p. 9) explains how the one-word descriptors can improve understanding or distort truth. When journalists label a think tank "independent," we automatically paint a mental picture of a tough, autonomous, and resolute group. But what, exactly, are such institutions independent of? Might journalists be confusing independence with unpredictability?

The constant flux that results from not being grounded in principles can indeed be dressed up as independence. Unfortunately, it seems that those think tanks frequently described in the news as "independent" are the ones that seem bereft of guiding principles for their work.

You probably know the kind of so-called independent organizations I mean. On any given issue, you can't be sure what guides their thinking. On one issue, they're for a lot more government intervention. On the next, they think a little bit more government is just the right amount. Later, less government is fine. On some issues, they conclude individual freedom is good. On others, people can't be trusted to run their own lives.

Weak or absent principles leads to loss of organizational independence by inviting undue influence from outsiders. Clients who pay for research, powerful constituencies, politicians, and pollsters can end up controlling an unprincipled think tank, buffeting it in different directions.

It's frustrating when such groups, in Michigan and at the national level, are called "independent," because only organizations like the Mackinac Center—who are grounded in principle—stick to a research agenda, conduct studies that test their principles, publish conclusions, and let the chips fall where they may. Truly independent organizations cannot operate independent of strong principles.

Mackinac Center supporters know that we invest every dollar they contribute to investigate sound policy based on enduring principles of limited government and free markets. Those who want ideas on how to become a freer society with less government interference come to us. Those who don't think the amount of government matters very much usually go elsewhere.

The next time you see a policy research institute labeled "independent," think about this: If you cannot imagine substituting the word "principled" for "independent," maybe that organization isn't so independent after all.!

Joseph G. Lehman

Center Scholars Honored for Personal Risks and Sacrifices

Over two centuries ago, brave men like Samuel Adams, Patrick Henry, and George Washington were willing to risk everything for the cause of freedom. On Nov. 3, 2000, two men who today embody the spirit of liberty that animated our forefathers were honored with Mackinac Center for Public Policy "Lives, Fortunes and Sacred Honor" Awards at the Center's annual Scholars Summit.

Mackinac Center scholar and newly appointed Federal Elections Commission member Bradley A. Smith was presented with the award for "his principled stance on campaign finance reform in the face of fierce opposition from the highest levels of the federal government and most of the nation's major daily newspapers." Smith has consistently



FEC appointee Bradley Smith was the target of a hysterical nationwide smear campaign for his advocacy of less restrictive campaign finance laws.

advocated broad First Amendment protections for political speech and the easing of restrictions on campaign donations. He joined the Mackinac Center's Board of Scholars in 1987.

Smith was sworn in to the FEC in June after a protracted national political battle held up his nomination for an entire year. Proponents of greater government control of political campaign



William Wilson endured a vendetta from powerful labor unions who were angered by his forthright support for workers' rights.

contributions, including President Clinton and many newspaper editorial boards, protested Smith's positions. *The New York Times* called his nomination "an insult," while other papers dubbed him a "flat earth society poobah" and likened him to former Yugoslavian strongman Slobodan Milosevic.

Mackinac Center scholar and former vice president of

Comerica Bank William T. Wilson received the award "for his courageous defense of free labor markets against compulsory unionism in testimony before the Michigan Legislature and in the press." Wilson's eloquence incurred the wrath of powerful labor unions, even though his calls for an end to compulsory unionism find support among many Michigan workers.

Since 1998, the Mackinac Center has honored with Lives, Fortunes, and Sacred Honor Awards individuals who conspicuously risk personal interests to advance sound economics and individual freedom in Michigan. The award draws its name from the Declaration of Independence signers, who "pledge[d] to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor" in furtherance of the goal of liberty.!

Election Commissioner: Laws Suppress Healthy Politics

In his first Mackinac Center address after being appointed to the Federal Election Commission, longtime Adjunct Scholar Bradley A. Smith explained to the Center's Board of Scholars how federal election laws suppress healthy, grassroots political involvement.

In his Nov. 3 speech to kick off the annual Scholars Summit, Smith said current election laws muzzle free speech and protect incumbent politicians and major parties from chal-



Mackinac Center scholar Bradley A. Smith, pictured here with his wife, Julie, was sworn in to the Federal Election Commission by federal judge James L. Buckley (right) at a special ceremony June 26 at the Cato Institute in Washington.

lenges by lesser known candidates, deterring practically everyone except political professionals from full involvement in the

campaign workers and volunteers.

Smith is the first Mackinac Center scholar to receive a

democratic process. Smith cited actual cases to illustrate how complex election laws strictly limit fundraising, dictate political ad language, and foist arcane rules and stiff penalties on

presidential appointment. His book, *Unfree Speech: The Folly of Campaign Finance Reform*, will be available from Princeton University Press in February.

The Scholars Summit continued for a full day Nov. 4, with fast-paced exchanges of ideas in 12 sessions, including

- University of Michigan Professor Keith Crocker explaining how government mandates drive medicine costs higher than many patients can afford;
- Hillsdale College Professor

See "Summit" on page 10

Mackinac Center Stays “On Message” in the Media

During the “silly season” of frenzied political campaigns and elections, Mackinac Center for Public Policy research remained prominent in print and broadcast media outlets. Here are just a few of last quarter’s highlights:

- In October, the Mackinac Center’s offer to help the Westwood Community Schools district in Dearborn Heights improve its educational program made headlines throughout Michigan. Westwood officials are suing the state over school choice policies they claim are causing racial segregation in Westwood schools. Senior Vice President Joseph Overton proposed that the district instead contract with the Mackinac Center to make its schools more attractive to fleeing students. The Center’s offer was rejected, but not before an Oct. 29 *Detroit News* editorial urged school officials to meet with Mackinac Center

education and privatization experts.

- On Oct. 11, Director of Education Policy Matthew Brouillette discussed on



Reed explains to viewers how President Grover Cleveland captured the popular vote in the 1888 election but lost in the Electoral College. Cleveland conceded, saying he did not want “to win by a cowardly subterfuge.”

Kalamazoo radio station WKZO the findings of a Mackinac Center survey that revealed Michigan legislators are far more likely to send their children to private schools than are parents in the general public. A Nov. 6 *Wall Street Journal* editorial on Proposal 1 in Michigan

highlighted the results of the Center survey, conducted in summer 2000.

- Research Project Manager and *Michigan Privatization*

Report editor Michael LaFaive explained in a Nov. 12 commentary in *The Detroit News* how privatization could save lives by solving Detroit’s problems with its fire department.

- The *Detroit Free Press* ran a commentary Nov. 15 by President Lawrence Reed, who told readers the story of how President Grover Cleveland graciously accepted an Electoral College defeat in the election of 1888, even though Cleveland had won the popular vote by 100,000

votes. Reed earlier spoke about Cleveland on a Nov. 10 WNEM Channel 5 newscast, the video of which is viewable on the Mackinac Center’s web site, www.mackinac.org.

- In an Oct. 30 *Detroit News* commentary, Senior Vice President Joseph Overton explained that if the battle for Michigan’s school voucher plan is any indication, citizens should not expect a civil discourse on the merits of school reform from defenders of the educational status quo.

- A Nov. 10 Washington Times op-ed by columnist Tom Bray analyzing the failure of voucher initiatives in Michigan and California called the Mackinac Center “the premier think tank out in the states.” Bray noted that tax credit plans, such as the Center’s Universal Tuition Tax Credit, could overcome some of the constitutional and legal objections some

See “**Media**” on page 11

“**Web site**” from page 1

week later, **SchoolChoiceWorks.org** had already received over 10,000 “hits” from people eager to educate themselves and friends about the benefits of school choice.

“The launch of **SchoolChoiceWorks.org** will provide information people just don’t get from 30-second television ads or bumper stickers,” said Matthew Brouillette, the Mackinac Center’s director of education policy. “We want the citizens of Michigan to

make decisions about school choice that are informed by facts and research, not slick slogans and brochures,” he added.

The web site addresses issues such as special education and accountability in private and religious schools, as well as questions regarding separation of church and state. Online video clips answer questions such as, “Is school choice necessary?” and, “Will school choice help public education?” Users also are provided access to timely

research and commentary on school choice. One unique feature, called “Ask the School Choice Expert,” emails answers to users’ direct questions within 48 hours.

“This web site is designed to provide ‘one-stop-shopping’ for anyone who wants to know more about the benefits of school choice,” said Brouillette. “As the debate continues over education reform,



An informative bank of streaming video clips educates and informs users about all aspects of school choice.

SchoolChoiceWorks.org will be Michigan’s best resource for separating fact from fiction.”!

Dobsons Salute Mackinac Center at Ann Arbor Luncheon

On Sept. 14, 2000, longtime Mackinac Center for Public Policy supporters William and Mary Dobson hosted over 100 friends and community leaders at a special luncheon held in honor of the Mackinac Center at the Barton Hills Country Club in Ann Arbor.

Bob Lyons, a member of the Mackinac Center's Southeast Michigan Board of Advisors, welcomed and entertained guests as the event's master of ceremonies. The luncheon served to acquaint many attendees with the Mackinac Center's mission, policy initiatives, and leadership for the first time.

Domino's Pizza Chairman and CEO David Brandon, also a Board of Advisors member, shared with the audience his reflections about the importance and effectiveness of the Mackinac Center's free-market policy research and the growth of the Center's influence statewide.

Mackinac Center President Lawrence Reed provided specific examples of policy successes in his keynote address, describing recent progress in key areas including education reform and labor policy. Reed also discussed plans to establish the Center's new Lansing-based Statesmanship Institute. The Institute, he told attendees, will elevate the



President Lawrence Reed poses with longtime Mackinac Center benefactors William and Mary Dobson.

quality of political leadership in Michigan by equipping current and prospective legislative candidates with a solid understanding of the principles of sound political economy.

Board of Advisors member Joseph Fitzsimmons, president of Nonprofit Enterprise at Work, concluded the

luncheon by announcing the launch of a major funding campaign to secure the \$1.3 million needed to open a Lansing office and conduct the Institute's training programs.

The Mackinac Center is grateful to the Dobsons for generously underwriting the luncheon. "I believe strongly in the free-market work of the Mackinac Center," said Bill Dobson. "I really appreciate the important service it provides to the people of Michigan in advancing freedom and free enterprise for the benefit of all."!

University President: High Tech Is Key to Michigan Economy

Assembled news media, Mackinac Center for Public Policy friends and supporters, and local community leaders turned out to hear about trends in Michigan higher education and the economy from the latest speaker in the Mackinac Center's Visiting Dignitaries lecture program.

On Nov. 28, the newly installed president of Central Michigan University, Dr. Michael Rao, explained what the high-tech revolution means for higher education in the state of Michigan: a greater-than-ever demand for graduate-level degrees. Rao's address, "High Tech and Higher Ed: Partners in the New Economy," was



Central Michigan University President Michael Rao tells an audience at the Mackinac Center that economic growth ultimately depends on a highly educated work force.

delivered to a full house in the Morey Conference Room at the Mackinac Center's Midland headquarters.

"The greatest risk to Michigan's economy is its shortage of intellectually

developed workers," Rao told the audience. He defined those workers as people who "take responsibility and initiative" and can work "as part of culturally diverse teams with people from other backgrounds."

Rao expressed his intention to expand CMU's capabilities and reputation as a research powerhouse, with an emphasis on what he considers one of the hottest areas of the new economy, "knowledge management." Knowledge management, he said, is "a mechanism for plugging into vast amounts of data, pulling out what is needed, and plugging that info in so it can be used in the most strategic ways."

Rao's efforts to gain funding

for CMU's new research center have already borne fruit. Michigan-based corporations including Meijer and Dow Chemical have committed to a partnership with the university.

Rao comes to CMU from Montana State University Northern, where he served as chancellor. Before that, he was president of Mission College in Santa Clara, Calif.

Previous participants in the Center's Visiting Dignitaries program have included Hillsdale College President Larry Arnn, Michigan Speaker of the House Chuck Perricone, and Michigan Lt. Gov. Dick Posthumus.!

Experts Teach Students the Secret of Winning Debates at Privacy Workshops

Over 500 Michigan high school students sharpened their debate skills at the 13th annual Mackinac Center for Public Policy High School Debate Workshops, held September and October 2000.

Debate students and coaches from 36 schools around the state came to the full-day

educational sessions—conducted in Jackson, Livonia, Grand Rapids, and Midland—to get the intellectual ammunition they needed to have a winning debate season. Earlier in the year, the National Forensic Association chose the annual debate resolution: *Resolved: That the United States federal government should significantly increase protection of privacy in*

the United States in one or more of the following areas: employment, medical records, consumer information, search and seizure.

Expert speakers provided in-depth instruction in constitutional, economic, and philosophical principles to help students develop and fine-tune arguments that take into account the way a free

society deals with questions of privacy. Students also received free packets jam-packed with information to help them better research, understand, and debate privacy issues.

The speakers included David Beers, a consultant for the Foundation for Economic Education (FEE); Gary Leff, director of development for



George Mason University's Institute for Humane Studies and Mercatus Center; Gregory Rehmke, director of FEE's High School Speech and Debate Program; and Solveig Singleton, former director of information studies at the Cato Institute in Washington, D.C.

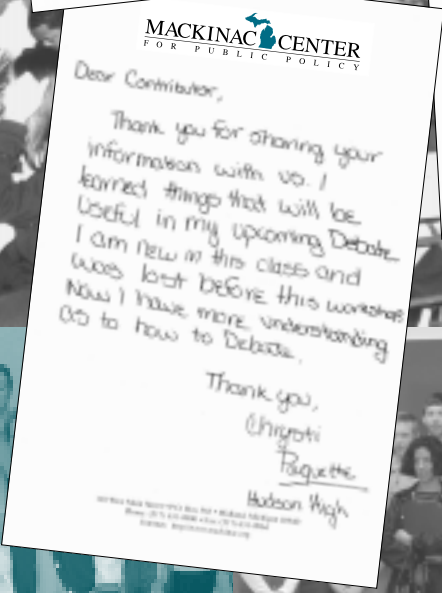
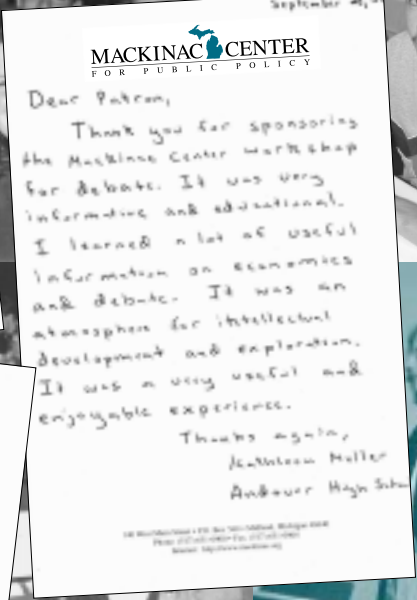
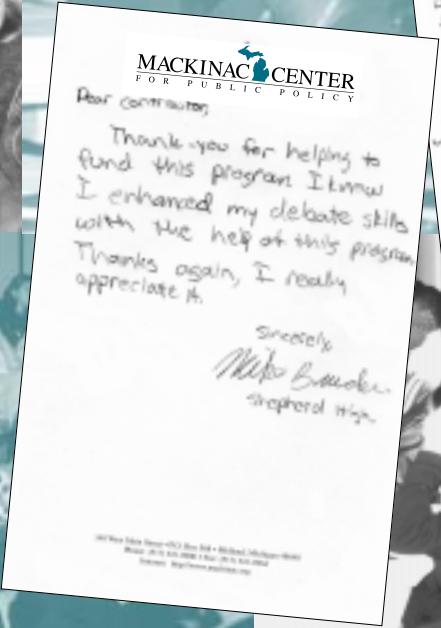
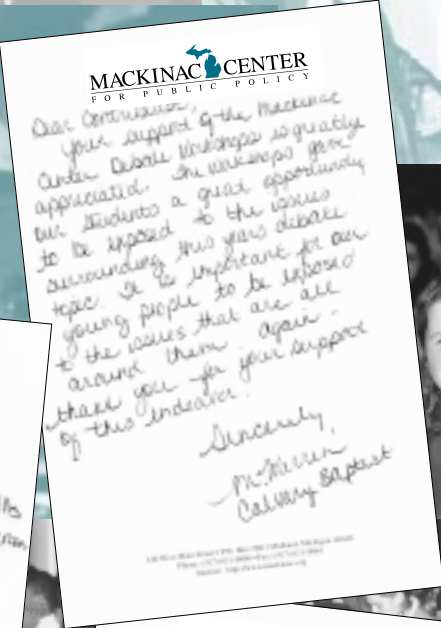
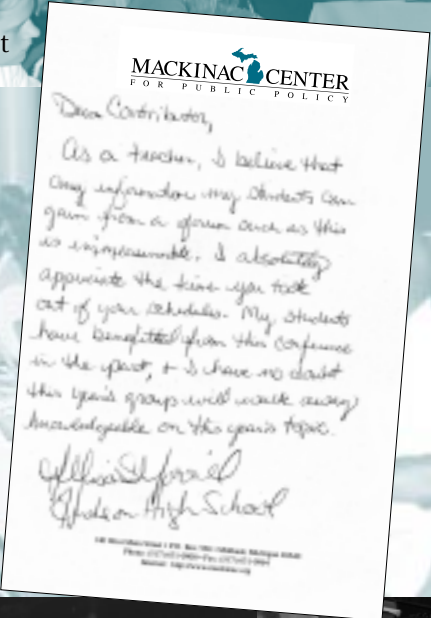
An extra workshop, held at the Mackinac Center's head-

quarters building, provided 20 home-schooled students with information about immigration, the debate topic selected by the home-schooling community.

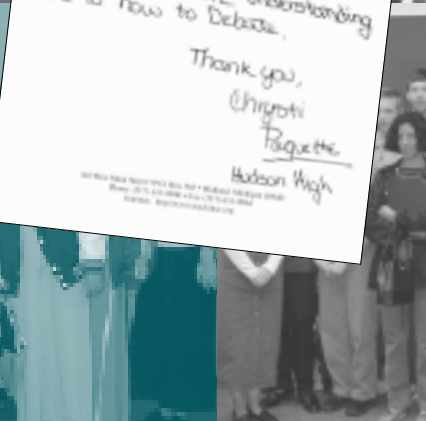
Throughout the debate season, students can log on to the Mackinac Center's web page, www.mackinac.org, to access our "Ask the Debate Coach" feature. This service

provides students with expert help on the debate topic within 48 hours after they submit inquiries.

The 2000 workshops were generously underwritten by the Charles J. Strosacker Foundation, the Oakspring Foundation, McDonald and Company Securities, and Kevin and Meg Cusack.!



Grand Rapids



Lifelong Freedom Fighters Recognized with Awards

On Nov. 3, 2000, the Mackinac Center for Public Policy had the privilege of publicly honoring three of its most valued and trusted friends for their lifetime commitment to expanding political liberty and economic opportunity for all.

Two “Champions of Freedom” awards were bestowed upon longtime Mackinac Center benefactors Lovett and Ruth Peters of Chestnut Hill, Mass., and Mackinac Center Board of Directors member James Rodney during the Center’s annual Board of Scholars Summit in Midland. The Peterses’ son, Dan, accepted the award on behalf of his parents, who were unable to attend.

The Peterses are trustees of the Ruth and Lovett Peters Charitable Trust, which generously contributes to free-market causes around the country. At the age of 75, Lovett established the Pioneer Institute, a free-market, state-based think tank headquartered in Boston.

“Lovett and Ruth Peters are tireless fighters for the principles that define the very essence of Americanism,” said Mackinac Center President Lawrence Reed. “With their inspiration and resources, they’ve helped many organizations, including the Mackinac



Ruth and Lovett Peters.



Mackinac Center President Lawrence Reed (left) and board member James Rodney.

Center. When the battle for school choice and quality education is finally won in America, millions of children will owe eternal gratitude to these two pioneers of reform,” Reed said.

As a lifelong entrepreneur and foe of corporate welfare, James Rodney has served as an inspiration to the Mackinac Center and other organizations dedicated to

the cause of freedom. Through his generous gifts, Rodney has helped the Mackinac Center achieve influence and effect positive policy change.

“Jim Rodney is a consistent, dedicated, and invaluable defender of the goal of a free society,” said Mackinac Center Board Chairman Joseph Olson. “Jim’s moral and financial support have moved Michigan—and America—significantly toward the achievement of that goal.”

Champions of Freedom awards are presented in recognition of a lifetime of accomplishment and faithful dedication to the principles of freedom and self-reliance. !

Running the Race to Win

Everybody wants to be on the winning team. Americans in particular like being associated with winners. Perhaps it’s a reflection of our highly competitive society, as evidenced by our vigorous open marketplaces, our passion for sporting games, or our basic instinct to survive.

But I think there’s an additional element that undergirds our competitive drive to win—an ingredient that reflects our better impulses to do good by doing well. Business people know that producing a high-quality product or providing good service at a competitive price doesn’t just satisfy customer needs. It fuels an economy

that allows workers to earn a meaningful wage. Olympic athletes know years of rigorous training don’t just yield medals and acclaim. They build character and discipline. And they raise a standard of excellence that challenges others to achieve.

The Mackinac Center knows something about running to win. We enjoy a growing national reputation, not just for championing the cause of freedom, but as the nation’s premier state-based free-market public-policy organization. Our track record of success at setting the policy agenda and tenaciously advancing it has earned us a reputation as the best of the best. This, in large part, is why 30 percent of the



Christina K. Smith, Vice President for Advancement

Center’s financial support now comes from investors beyond Michigan’s borders.

But what really drives our commitment to rank at the top among our peers in the free-market policy movement? National acclaim? Increased media attention? Bragging rights?

The real answer lies in our vision, which is to transform Michigan into the nation’s freest and most prosperous state. For 13 years, the

Mackinac Center has championed the rights of Michigan citizens to pursue creative and productive lives free from the intrusive hand of government. We’re achieving impressive gains, especially in education reform, privatization of government services, and protection of workers’ rights.

But we haven’t finished the race for freedom and much remains to do. We’re running to win, but we can’t succeed without your help. Thank you for being a part of our winning team and for helping us chart a positive course for Michigan’s future. We pledge to run well in our race to achieve greater freedom and opportunity for all citizens. !

Political Labels Are a Poor Substitute for Critical Thinking

by Lawrence W. Reed

When it comes to political matters, Americans are hung up on labels. Everywhere you turn, somebody is calling somebody else some name—shorthand for what the other person's ideological leanings are perceived to be. If labels inform, they can be useful. But when they confuse or distort, they're worse than useless.

Consider "liberals" on the one hand versus "conservatives" on the other. "Liberal" was once used to describe those who put the ideals of political and economic liberty first. Over the course of the 20th century in America, it flip-flopped into a term for those who would gladly trade liberty for a mess of pottage from the state.

"Conservative" is sometimes used to describe someone who wants to preserve the status quo. At other times, it's used to describe one who wants to restore a limited role for government (at least in most economic matters), which today is not a status quo posture.

And how about the word "moderate"? It's been sanctified to describe someone who is full of thoughtful objectivity. Look closer and you usually find a person who hasn't done his homework and can't make up his mind. And when he finally does reach a conclusion, it's often inconsistent with other views he holds.

People are assigned these simplistic political labels with abandon. But close inspec-

tion almost always yields good reasons why, on at least some important issues, the assigned monikers don't fit. Shorthand just doesn't do the job when we're talking about how complex principles apply to current issues.

If we must label people, however, we should do so in more meaningful ways, with fewer "sound bite" appellations. One way to do that is to describe traits and tendencies as they arise. For starters: Why not differentiate between people who are satisfied with rhetoric versus those who demand results?

Many who advocate governmental efforts to address social problems once regarded as private responsibilities almost always settle for rhetoric alone. Perhaps

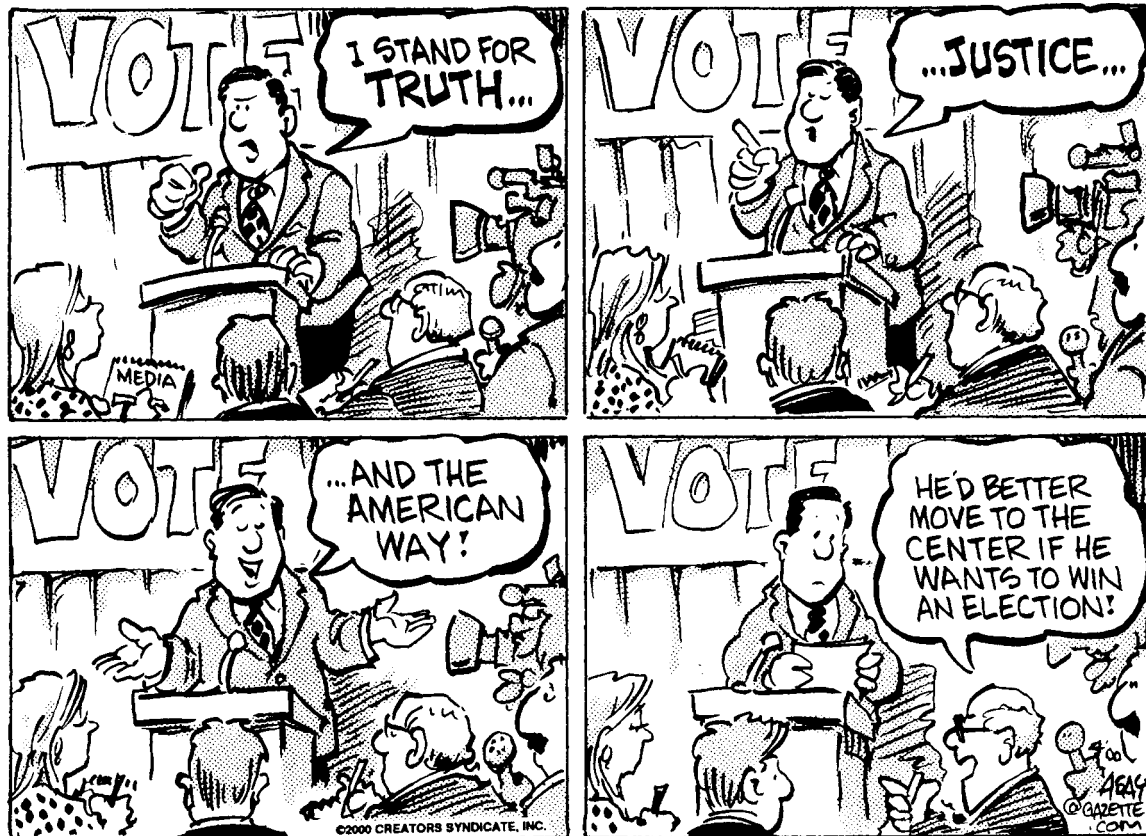
that's because their handiwork rarely produces results that are worth bragging about. To such people, it's usually enough to simply declare concern for the poor to prove that one really cares. It doesn't matter that government programs to help the poor have actually hurt them instead—a painful fact which both experience and economics should have forecast in advance.


People who advocate nongovernmental solutions—changes in attitudes and behavior, strengthening of the family, the involvement of churches and private associations, for example—are not typically animated by rhetoric. They are focused on results, and they have the incredible story of the American experience to which they can proudly point. It wasn't rhetoric that carved a great civilization out of wilderness. It wasn't mere professions of concern that fed, clothed, and housed more people at higher levels of prosperity than any other society in history. It was a combination of strong families, rugged self-reliance, effective volunteer associations, wealth-creating private initiative, and risk-taking entrepreneurship.

Here's another meaningful way to categorize people's thinking: Those who are happy with short-term answers versus those who plan for the long run.

Some people think only of the here-and-now. Others see further ahead and recognize that quick fixes

See **"Labels"** on page 10





“Labels” from page 9

often yield long-term disaster. For example, those who favor governmental “solutions” to say, poverty, often seem to think that tossing the poor a government check is the answer. They observe the beneficiary spending the check on groceries and conclude that they have done good.

But those who support nongovernmental solutions know the meaning of the old adage, “Give me a fish and I eat for a day; teach me to fish and I eat for a lifetime.” They don’t see today’s groceries as the answer to tomorrow’s hunger and they know that something more

fundamental than a government check is required to prepare for a brighter future.

Another possible method of drawing distinctions and applying accurate descriptions: Those who exhibit little interest in liberty versus those who understand that without liberty, little else either matters or is possible.

People who favor more and more government programs are willing to sacrifice the liberties of everyone for the sake of handouts for a few. Those who prefer private measures to address problems understand that govern-

ment has nothing to give anybody except what it first takes from somebody else. A government big enough to give you everything you want has become big enough to take away everything you’ve got.

Instead of settling for the standard, increasingly irrelevant labels of today’s parlance, we should concentrate on explaining to people that the ideas worth supporting are those that are tested and found worthwhile for three reasons. First, they produce results. Second, they don’t mortgage the future for the sake of the present. And finally, they

don’t treat other people’s liberty as though it were so much scrap paper waiting to be cleared away.

To the extent this approach compels people to dig deeper and learn more than what can fit on a bumper sticker, public debate will be that much better informed.!

Adapted with permission from the January 2001 issue of Ideas on Liberty, published by the Foundation for Economic Education (FEE). Mackinac Center President Lawrence Reed is chairman of FEE’s board of trustees. See FEE’s web site at www.fee.org.

“Rights” from page 1

equivalent to his compulsory union fees be sent to a charity of his choice.

Storm, a devout Christian, was questioned about the sincerity of his beliefs. But his local union ultimately recognized his rights and relieved him of a \$580 annual payment to the Michigan Education Association and the National Education Association (the union’s parent organizations).

The national union’s cooperation may have been motivated more by a federal lawsuit alleging it interfered with members’ religious rights than by its desire to accommodate Storm’s concerns. Storm, however, believes the sincerity of his beliefs also made a difference and that his experience should give hope to those in similar circumstances.

“Religious objectors can prevail when they are armed with the facts and know their legal rights, especially if God is on their side,” he said. “The Mackinac Center and other like-minded organizations are a great benefit to workers in my situation.”

“Mr. Storm’s case should set a precedent for all workers who object to funding causes that are contrary to their deeply held religious convictions,” said Mackinac Center Director of Labor Policy Robert Hunter.

Hunter, a former National Labor Relations Board member, and Labor Research Assistant Alicia Sikkenga regularly assist union workers who need help asserting their rights in the workplace.!

“Summit” from page 3

Richard Ebeling, co-discoverer of Ludwig von Mises’s papers stolen by the Nazis and Soviets, speaking on the Austrian economist’s insights as a policy analyst;

- Central Michigan University instructor Dr. Thomas F. Bertonneau speaking on the historical role of literacy in the development of market economies;
- University of Kentucky Associate Professor Jeff Edgens explaining the benefits of market-based incentives to preserve land, and common myths surrounding farmland loss;
- Annette Kirk, director of the Russell Kirk Center for Cultural Renewal, speaking on her program that equips resident fellows to invigorate institutions vital to sustaining the culture;
- Oakland County (Michigan) Assistant Deputy County Executive Robert

Daddow detailing important measures of fiscal soundness for municipalities;

- Walsh College Professor Harry Veryser, Jr., outlining his school’s new master’s degree program that emphasizes the history of Austrian economic thought; and
- Hillsdale College Professor Gary Wolfram explaining systemic and inherent flaws in Michigan’s K-12 education system, and why school choice and other incentives are needed to improve the schools.

The Board of Scholars is a 39-member body of academics and policy experts who advise, conduct, and review research for, the Mackinac Center for Public Policy.!

Viewpoint Commentaries

The Quackery of Equality

November 2000 V2000-33

"Free people are not equal and equal people are not free" is a profound truth that politicians forget when they try to enforce economic equality through punitive taxes and regulations.

Government Should Withdraw from Attempts to Ban ATM Fees

November 2000 V2000-34

Government bans on unpopular automatic teller machine transaction fees could deprive consumers of the valued convenience of accessing their bank accounts virtually anywhere.

As Values Collapse, Government Grows

November 2000 V2000-35

Promoting ethical values such as honesty, respect, and personal responsibility ought to be a top priority for freedom-loving Americans. The alternative is a nanny state that passes ever more laws to restrain citizens' poor behavior.

The "Patients' Bill of Rights": Get Two Lawyers and Call Me in the Morning

November 2000 V2000-36

The "patients' bill of rights" being debated in Congress would only encourage costly litigation but do little to improve Americans' access to affordable, quality health care and insurance.

Schools Should Stand Behind Their Diplomas

December 2000 V2000-37

More districts should follow the example of Grand Rapids-area Rockford Public Schools, which guarantees that its graduates

possess basic skills by requiring them to pass competency tests before receiving their diplomas.

Coming to Terms with Term Limits

December 2000 V2000-38

Contrary to what some observers are arguing, it is far too soon to declare Michigan's experience with term limits for public officials a failure.

Teacher's Case Shows How Union Workers Can Re-Direct Dues to Charity

December 2000 V2000-39

A Livonia teacher recently won his bid to send his union dues to charity as an alternative to funding the union's political and moral agenda, which he opposes on religious grounds.

color *MPR* offers suggestions for how the city can better manage



its budget to meet the challenges of the new millennium. Articles examine wastewater treatment and garbage collection privatization, the sale of Cobo Center and other assets, privatization of water and transportation services, and privatization in the city's public schools. 28 pages.

Journals

Michigan Education Report



MER2000-04 \$3.00

MER covers education and elections, the cost to colleges and businesses of training unprepared K-12 graduates, teacher short-

ages, character education in public schools, and the private school boom funded by pizza entrepreneur Tom Monaghan. A former state legislator and the executive director of the Michigan School Board Leaders Association debate whether school choice will lead to fraudulent schools. 12 pages.

Michigan Privatization Report

MPR2000-04 \$3.00

As Detroit's tricentennial approaches, this first-ever full-

How to Order

VIEWPOINTS: Viewpoints on Public Issues are two-page commentaries on current Michigan policy issues. Three or four are published each month. Individual Viewpoints are 50¢ each. Please call for bulk discounts. All publications are available at no charge via the Internet at www.mackinac.org. For telephone orders, please call the Mackinac Center at (517) 631-0900. The Center accepts Visa, MasterCard, and Discover/NOVUS for your convenience. Please have your card and item title(s) handy when calling. If you do not have the Mackinac Center for Public Policy's current publications catalog, please request your free copy when ordering.

"Media" from page 4

have to school choice plans that are based on the use of publicly funded vouchers.

- Director of Labor Policy Robert Hunter was quoted in a Dec. 10 *Detroit News* article about labor unrest at airlines including Northwest, United, and Delta. The airlines' use of federal courts to combat union-initiated slowdowns has "leveled the playing field" between employee unions and management, said Hunter.

- Executive Vice President Joseph Lehman was featured prominently in a Dec. 14 *Detroit News* story on the Republican Party's leadership role in Washington. Lehman explained that a congressional majority of a particular political party is not enough to reduce the size and scope of government, noting that Republicans have actually increased funding for many of the programs they promised to eliminate when they took over Congress in 1995.!

**\$2,000
Finder's Fee
for New Hires!**

Several senior fundraising, research assistant, and project positions are open at the Mackinac Center for Public Policy. Earn \$2,000 for a successful referral! See "Career Opportunities" at www.mackinac.org.

Center Scholar Appointed to Save City from Ruin

After teetering on the brink of financial disaster, the Detroit-area city of Hamtramck is on its way back to fiscal health and stability following the state's appointment of Mackinac Center for Public Policy Board of Scholars member Louis Schimmel as the city's emergency financial manager.

A state-appointed, three-member emergency board selected Schimmel in November 2000 to help the troubled city erase its \$2.4-million debt. In early December, Schimmel got to work by immediately shaving 30 non-essential city jobs from the budget, saving the community \$600,000. More changes designed to make the city solvent again are sure to come.



Lou Schimmel is applying to Hamtramck the same budget management and privatization expertise he used to bring the city of Ecorse out of bankruptcy in the early 1990s.

This is not the first time Schimmel has applied his expertise to a distressed

municipality. In 1986, the state appointed him receiver of the bankrupt city of Ecorse, which was saddled with a \$6-million debt. By 1990, Schimmel had largely solved the problem and stepped down as receiver, continuing to watch over Ecorse's finances until the city made its last loan repayment to the state in August 1999.

"Much of the deficit was eliminated by the privatization of nearly all city services," Schimmel explained in the spring 1996 issue of the Mackinac Center's *Michigan Privatization Report*. Within weeks of taking over Ecorse's financial matters, Schimmel transferred responsibility for such

services as trash collection and snowplowing from government to private service providers, reaping tremendous savings and reversing Ecorse's financial decline.

"Schimmel is credited with making the tough decisions that helped turn the city [of Ecorse] around," a recent *Detroit Free Press* article concluded.

Schimmel is director of the Municipal Advisory Council of Michigan, a nonprofit company that provides research services on all municipal bond issues in the state. He has been a member of the Mackinac Center Board of Scholars for nearly 10 years. !

MACKINAC  **CENTER**
FOR PUBLIC POLICY
140 West Main Street • P.O. Box 568 • Midland, Michigan 48640

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MIDLAND, MI 48640
PERMIT #275