
VIEWS LETTER

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AWD's Views & Other Things of Interest

May & June 2001

The Boys of Iwo Jima

By Michael T. Powers

Each year I am hired to go to Washington DC with the eighth grade class from Clinton, WI where I grew up, to videotape their trip. I greatly enjoy visiting our nation's capitol, and each year I take some special memories back with me. This fall's trip was especially memorable.

On the last night of our trip we stopped at the Iwo Jima memorial. This memorial is the largest bronze statue in the world and depicts one of the most famous photographs in history - that of the six brave soldiers raising the American Flag at the top of a rocky hill on the Island of Iwo Jima, Japan during WW II. Over one hundred students and chaperones piled off the buses and headed towards the memorial. I noticed a solitary figure at the base of the statue, and as I got closer he asked, "Where are you guys from?"

Continued on page two see IWO JIMA

Humbling Perspectives

Sent to me by Lucy Davis, my little sister.

--Think about how FORTUNATE YOU are!

If we could shrink the earth's population to a village of precisely 100 people, with all the existing human ratios remaining the same, it would look something like the following.

There would be 57 Asians, 21 Europeans, 14 from the Western Hemisphere, both north and south, 8 Africans; 52 would be female, 48 would be male; 70 would be non-white, 30 would be white; 70 would be non-Christian, 30 would be Christian; 89 would be heterosexual, 11 would be homosexual; 6 people would possess 59% of the entire world's wealth and all 6 would be from the United States. 80 would live in substandard housing, 70 would be unable to read, 50 would suffer from malnutrition, 1 would be near death; 1 would be near birth, 1 (yes, only 1) would have a college education, and 1 would own a computer.

Continued on page 3 see PERSPECTIVES

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Military Courtesy Change

By *Unknown Author* Page 4

Trials and Tribulations of a House Dog

By *Jasmine Doudney Schnauzer Dog* Page 8

The best index to a person's character is how he treats people who can't do him any good, and how he treats people who can't fight back.

—Abigail Van Buren

Money Root of all Evil?

"So you think that money is the root of all evil?" Said Francisco d'Anconia. "Have you ever asked what is the root of money? Money is a tool of exchange, which can't exist unless there are goods produced and men able to produce them. Money is the material shape of the principle that men who wish to deal with one another must deal by trade and give value for value. Money is not the tool of the moochers, who claim your product by tears, or of the looters, who take it from you by force. Money is made possible only by the men who produce. Is this what you consider evil?"

"When you accept money in payment for

Continued on page 4 see MONEY

I told him that we were from Wisconsin. "Hey, I'm a Cheesehead too! Come gather around Cheeseheads, and I will tell you a story."

(James Bradley just happened to be in Washington, D.C. to speak at the memorial the following day. He was there that night to say good night to his dad, who has since passed away. He was just about to leave when he saw the buses pull up. I videotaped him as he spoke to us, and received his permission to share what he said from my videotape. It is one thing to tour the incredible monuments filled with history in Washington, D.C.. But it is quite another to get the kind of insight we received that night. When all had gathered around, he reverently began to speak. Here are his words that night.)

"My name is James Bradley, and I'm from Antigo, Wisconsin. My dad is on that statue, and I just wrote a book called "Flags of Our Fathers" which is #5 on the New York Times Best Seller List right now. It is the story of the six boys you see behind me. Six boys raised the flag.

The first guy putting the pole in the ground is Harlon Block. Harlon was an all-state football player. He enlisted in the Marine Corps with all the senior members of his football team. They were off to play another type of game. A game called "War." But it didn't turn out to be a game. Harlon, at the age of 21, died with his intestines in his hands.

(He pointed to the statue) You see this next guy? That's Rene Gagnon from New Hampshire. If you took Rene's helmet off at the moment this photo was taken, and looked in the webbing of that helmet, you would find a photograph. A photograph of his girlfriend. Rene put that in there for protection, because he was scared. He was 18 years old. Boys won the battle of Iwo Jima. Boys. Not old men.

The next guy here, the third guy in this tableau, was Sergeant Mike Strank. Mike is my hero. He was the hero of all these guys. They called him the "old man" because he was so old. He was already 24. When Mike would motivate his boys in training camp, he didn't say, "Let's

go kill some Japanese" or "Let's die for our country." He knew he was talking to little boys. Instead he would say, "You do what I say, and I'll get you home to your mothers."

The last guy on this side of the statue is Ira Hayes, a Pima Indian from Arizona. Ira Hayes walked off Iwo Jima. He went into the White House with my dad. President Truman told him, "You're a hero." He told reporters, "How can I feel like a hero when 250 of my buddies hit the island with me and only 27 of us walked off alive?"

So you take your class at school. 250 of you spending a year together having fun, doing everything together. Then all 250 of you hit the beach, but only 27 of your classmates walk off alive. That was Ira Hayes. He had images of horror in his mind. Ira Hayes died dead drunk, face down at the age of 32. Ten years after this picture was taken.

The next guy, going around the statue is Franklin Sousley from Hilltop, Kentucky. A fun-lovin' hillbilly boy. His best friend, who is now 70 told me, "We pushed two cows up on the porch of the Hilltop General Store. Then we strung wire across the stairs so the cows couldn't get down. Then we fed them Epsom salts. You know what happened."

Yes he was a fun-lovin' hillbilly boy. Franklin died on Iwo Jima at the age of 19. When the telegram came to tell his mother that he was dead, it went to the Hilltop General Store. A barefoot boy ran that telegram up to his mother's farm. The neighbors could hear her scream all night and into the morning. The neighbors lived a quarter of a mile away.

The next guy, as we continue to go around the statue, is my dad, John Bradley from Antigo, Wisconsin, where I was raised. My dad lived until 1994, but he would never give interviews. When Walter Cronkite's producers, or the New York Times would call, we were trained as little kids to say, "No, I'm sorry sir; my dad's not here. He is in Canada fishing. No, there is no phone there

Continued on page 3 see IWO JIMA

sir. No, we don't know when he is coming back."

My dad never fished or even went to Canada. Usually he was sitting there right at the table eating his Campbell's soup. But we had to tell the press that he was out fishing. He didn't want to talk to the press. You see, my dad didn't see himself as a hero. Everyone thinks these guys are heroes, because they are in a photo and a monument. My dad knew better. He was a medic. John Bradley from Wisconsin was a caregiver. In Iwo Jima he probably held over 200 boys as they died. And when boys died in Iwo Jima, they writhed and screamed in pain.

When I was a little boy, my third grade teacher told me that my dad was a hero. When I went home and told my dad that, he looked at me and said, "I want you always to remember that the heroes of Iwo Jima are the guys who did not come back."

So that's the story about six nice young boys. Three died on Iwo Jima, and three came back as national heroes. Overall 7000 boys died on Iwo Jima in the worst battle in the history of the Marine Corps. My voice is giving out, so I will end here. Thank you for your time."

Suddenly the monument wasn't just a big old piece of metal with a flag sticking out of the top. It came to life before our eyes with the heartfelt words of a son who did indeed have a father who was a hero. Maybe not a hero for the reasons most people would believe, but a hero nonetheless.



Michael T. Powers gave me permission to re-print this article.

I have read the book "FLAGS of OUR FATHERS, by James Bradley, and highly recommend it. It was a real eye opener for me. I couldn't put it down.

Comment by AWD.



When one considers our world from such a compressed perspective, the need for both acceptance, understanding and education becomes glaringly apparent.

The following is also something to ponder... If you woke up this morning with more health than illness...you are more blessed than the million who will not survive this week.

If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation ... you are ahead of 500 million people in the world.

If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead and a place to sleep...you are richer than 75% of this world.

If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish someplace ... you are among the top 8% of the world's wealthy.

If your parents are still alive and still married ... you are very rare, even in the United States and Canada.

If you hold up your head with a smile on your face and are truly thankful...you are blessed because the majority can, but most do not.

If you can hold someone's hand, hug them, or even touch them on the shoulder...you are blessed because you can offer healing touch.

If you can read this message, you just received a double blessing in that someone was thinking of you, and furthermore, you are more blessed than over two billion people in the world that cannot read at all.



Dear Readers,
Keep the cards, letters and donations coming I love hearing from you. e-mail address is; ViewsLetter@mmCable.com. Snail Mail: 1015 West Dorchester Way, Mustang, OK 73064

What is to give light must endure burning. -Viktor Frankl, author, neurologist and psvchiatrist. Holocaust survivor (1905-1997)

Military Courtesy Change

CNN showed President Bush leaving HM-1. The Marine at the front step saluted. President Bush returned it, and as he walked away, the Marine executed a right face to stand facing the President's back...something that was missing in eight years of the Clinton presidency.

The traditional Marine Corps mark of respect was rendered to the new President. That one goes back to the days in the rigging, when the Marine orderly to the ship's captain always faced him, no matter his direction of movement, to be ready to receive an order.

Who says that enlisted men can't hold back when they don't respect someone? ...And for eight years, they did.

The subtlety of it is elegance in its simplicity. Clinton never knew the difference, yet it occurred in front of the whole world. Here's to the Marine Corps. ❖❖

MONEY Continued from page 1.

your effort, you do so only on the conviction that you will exchange it for the product of the effort of others. It is not the moochers or the looters who give value to money. Not an ocean of tears nor all the guns in the world can transform those pieces of paper in your wallet into the bread you will need to survive tomorrow. Those pieces of paper, which should have been gold, are a token of honor---your claim upon the energy of the men who produce. Your wallet is your statement of hope that somewhere in the world around you there are men who will not default on that moral principle which is the root of money. Is this what you consider evil?

“Have you ever looked for the root of production? Take a look at an electric generator and dare tell yourself that it was created by the muscular effort of unthinking brutes. Try to grow a seed of wheat without the knowledge left to you by men who had to discover it for the

first time. Try to obtain your food by means of nothing but physical motions---and you'll learn that man's mind is the root of all the good produced and of all the wealth that has ever existed on earth.

“But you say that money is made by the strong at the expense of the weak? What strength do you mean? It is not the strength of guns or muscles. Wealth is the product of man's capacity to think. Then is money made by the man who invents a motor at the expense of those who did not invent it? Is money made by the intelligent at the expense of the fools? By the able at the expense of the incompetent? By the ambitious at the expense of the lazy? Money is made---before it can be looted or mooched---made by the effort of every honest man, each to the extent of his ability. An honest man is one who knows that he can't consume more than he has produced.

“To trade by means of money is the code of the men of good will. Money rests on the axiom that every man is the owner of his mind and his effort. Money allows no power to prescribe the value of your effort except the voluntary choice of the man who is willing to trade you his effort in return. Money permits you to obtain for your goods and your labor that which they are worth to the men who buy them, but no more. Money permits no deals except those to mutual benefit by the unforced judgement of the traders. Money demands of you the recognition that men must work for their own benefit, not for their own injury, for their gain, not their loss---the recognition that they are not beast of burden, born to carry the weight of your misery---that you must offer them values, not wounds---that the common bond among men is not the exchange of suffering, but the exchange of goods. Money demands that you sell, not your weakness to men's stupidity, but your talent to their reason; it demands that you buy, not the shoddiest they offer, but the best that your money can find. And when men live by trade---with reason, not force, as their final arbiter---it is the best product that

Continued on page 5 see **Money**

wins, the best performance, the man of best judgment and highest ability---and the degree of a man's productiveness is the degree of his reward. This is the code of existence whose tool and symbol is money. Is this what you consider evil?

"But money is only a tool. It will take you wherever you wish, but it will not replace you as the driver. It will give you the means for the satisfaction of your desires, but it will not provide you with desires. Money is the scourge of the men who attempt to reverse the law of causality--the men who seek to replace the mind by seizing the products of the mind.

"Money will not purchase happiness for the man who has no concept of what he wants: money will not give him a code of values, if he's evaded the knowledge of what to value, and it will not provide him with purpose, if he's evaded the choice of what to seek. Money will not buy intelligence for the fool, or admiration for the coward, or respect for the incompetent. The man who attempts to purchase the brains of his superiors to serve him, with his money replacing his judgment, ends up by becoming the victim of his inferiors. The men of intelligence desert him, but the cheats and the frauds come flocking to him, drawn by a law which he has not discovered: that no man may be smaller than his money. Is this the reason why you call it evil?

"Only the man who does not need it is fit to inherit wealth---the man who would make his own fortune no matter where he started. If an heir is equal to his money, it serves him; if not, it destroys him. But you look on and you cry that money corrupted him. Did it? Or did he corrupt his money? Do not envy a worthless heir; his wealth is not yours and you would have done no better with it. Do not think that it should have been distributed among you, loading the world with fifty parasites instead of one, would not bring back the dead virtue which was the fortune. Money is a living power that dies without its root. Money will not serve the mind that cannot match it. Is this the reason why you call it evil?

"Money is your means of survival. The verdict you pronounce upon the source of ↗

your livelihood is the verdict you pronounce upon your life. If the source is corrupt, you have damned your own existence. Did you get your money by fraud? By pandering to men's vices or men's stupidity? By catering to fools, in the hope of getting more than your ability deserves? By lowering your standards? By doing work you despise for purchasers you scorn? If so, then your money will not give you a moment's or a penny's worth of joy. Then all the things you buy will become, not a tribute to you, but a reproach; not an achievement, but a reminder of shame. Then you'll scream that money is evil. Evil, because it would not pinch-hit for your self-respect? Evil, because it would not let you enjoy your depravity? Is this the root of your hatred of money?

"Money will always remain an effect and refuse to replace you as the cause. Money is the product of virtue, but it will not give you virtue and it will not redeem your vices. Money will not give you the unearned, neither in matter nor in spirit. Is this the root of your hatred of money?

"Or did you say it's the love of money that's the root of all evil? To love a thing is to know and love its nature. To love money is to know and love the fact that money is the creation of the best power within you, and your passkey to trade your effort for the effort of the best among men. It's the person who would sell his soul for a nickel, who is loudest in proclaiming his hatred of money---and he has good reason to hate it. The lovers of money are willing to work for it. They know they are able to deserve it.

"Let me give you a tip on a clue to men's characters: the man who damns money has obtained it dishonorably; the man who respects it has earned it.

"Run for your life from any man who tells you that money is evil. That sentence is the leper's bell of an approaching looter. So long as men live together on earth and need to deal with one another---their only substitute, if they abandon money, is the muzzle of a gun.

"But money demands of you the highest virtues, if you wish to make it or to keep it. Men

who have no courage, pride or self esteem, men who have no moral sense of their right to their money and are not willing to defend it as they defend their life, men who apologize for being rich---will not remain rich for long. They are the natural bait for the swarms of looters that stay under rocks for centuries, but come crawling out at the first smell of a man who begs to be forgiven for the guilt of owning wealth. They will hasten to relieve him of the guilt---and of his life, as he deserves.

“Then you will see the rise of the men of the double standard---the men who live by force, yet count on those who live by trade to create the value of their looted money---the men who are the hitchhikers of virtue. In a moral society, these are the criminals, and the statutes are written to protect you against them. But when a society establishes criminals-by-right and looters-by-law--men who use force to seize the wealth of disarmed victims---then money becomes its creator's avenger. Such looters believe it safe to rob defenseless men, once they've passed a law to disarm them. But their loot becomes the magnet for other looters, who get it from them as they got it. Then the race goes, not to the ablest at production, but to those most ruthless at brutality. When force is the standard, the murderer wins over the pickpocket. And then that society vanishes, in a spread of ruins and slaughter.

“Do you wish to know whether that day is coming? Watch money. Money is the barometer of a society's virtue. When you see that trading is done, not by consent, but by compulsion---when you see that in order to produce, you need to obtain permission from men who produce nothing---when you see that money is flowing to those who deal, not in goods, but in favors---when you see that men get richer by graft and by pull than by work, and your laws don't protect you against them, but protect them against you---when you see corruption being rewarded and honesty becoming a self-sacrifice---you may know that your society is doomed. Money is ↗

so noble a medium that it does not compete with guns and it does not make terms with brutality. It will not permit a country to survive as half-property, half-loot.

“Whenever destroyers appear among men, they start by destroying money, for money is men's protection and the base of a moral existence. Destroyers seize gold and leave to its owners a counterfeit pile of paper. This kills all the objective standards and delivers men into the arbitrary power of an arbitrary setter of values. Gold was an objective value, an equivalent of wealth produced. Paper is a mortgage on wealth that does not exist, backed by a gun aimed at those who are expected to produce it. Paper is a check drawn by legal looters upon an account which is not theirs: upon the virtue of the victims. Watch for the day when it bounces, marked: ‘Account overdrawn.’

“When you have made evil the means of survival, do not expect men to remain good. Do not expect them to stay moral and lose their lives for the purpose of becoming the fodder of the immoral. Do not expect them to produce, when production is punished and looting rewarded. Do not ask, ‘Who is destroying the world?’ You are.

“You stand in the midst of the greatest achievements of the greatest productive civilization and you wonder why it's crumbling around you, while you're damning its life-blood---money. You look upon money as the savages did before you, and you wonder why the jungle is creeping back to the edge of your cities. Throughout men's history, money was always seized by looters of one brand or another, whose names changed, but whose method remained the same: to seize wealth by force and to keep the producers bound, demeaned, defamed, deprived of honor. That phrase about the evil of money, which you mouth with such righteous recklessness, comes from a time when wealth was produced by the labor of slaves---slaves who repeated the motions once discovered by somebody's mind and left unimproved for centuries. So long as production was ruled by

Continued on page 7 See **MONEY**

force, and wealth was obtained by conquest, there was little to conquer. Yet through all the centuries of stagnation and starvation, men exalted the looters, as aristocrats of birth, as aristocrats of the bureau, and despised the producers, as slaves, as traders, as shopkeepers---as industrialists.

“To the glory of mankind, there was, for the first and only time in history, a country of money---and I have no higher, more reverent tribute to pay to America, for this means: a country of reason, justice, freedom, production, achievement. For the first time, man’s mind and money were set free, and there were no fortunes-by-conquest, but only fortunes-by-work; instead of swordsmen and slaves, there appeared the real maker of wealth, the greatest worker, the highest type of human being---the self-made man---the American industrialist.

“If you ask me to name the proudest distinction of Americans, I would choose---because it contains all the others---the fact that they were the people who created the phrase ‘to make money.’ No other language or nation has ever used these words before; men had always thought of wealth as a static quantity---to be seized, begged, inherited, shared, looted or obtained as a favor. Americans were the first to understand that wealth has to be created. The words ‘to make money’ hold the essence of human morality.

“Yet these were the words for which Americans were denounced by the rotted cultures of the looters’ continents. Now the looters’ credo has brought you to regard your proudest achievements as a hallmark of shame, your prosperity as guilt, your greatest men, the industrialists, as blackguards, and your magnificent factories as the product and property of muscular labor, the labor of whip-driven slaves, like the pyramids of Egypt. The rotter who simpers that he sees no difference between the power of the dollar and the power of the whip, ought to learn the difference on his own hide---as, I think he will.

“Until and unless you discover that money ↗

is the root of all good, you ask for your own destruction. When money ceases to be the tool by which men deal with one another, then men become the tools of men. Blood, whips and guns---or dollars. Take your choice---there is no other---and your time is running out.”

By Ayn Rand, Taken from her novel “ATLAS SHRUGGED”

Some of the people that I love and respect the most might say, Wait a minute AWD aren’t you taking up with an atheistic point of view? My answer would be absolutely not. I haven’t said that I agree or disagree with what was stated by the fictional character Francisco d’ Anconia, not yet anyway---but a whole lot of what he stated makes a whole lot of sense.

In I Timothy 6:7-12 We get a little different perspective: For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. ⁸And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. ⁹But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. ¹⁰For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. ¹¹But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. ¹²Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

The sixth chapter of First Timothy says a whole lot more, and I encourage you to get out your Bible and to read the whole chapter. The Bible has much to say about money. It is obvious to me that I Timothy Chapter 6 is a pretty strong admonition to stay away from a person or persons whose god is money.

I also encourage you to read Matthew 25:14-30. In this scripture, Jesus tells the parable of the talents. In this parable the master praises his servants for using wealth---that he entrusted in them---to create more wealth. At the end of the scripture is a strong admonition not to be

Continued on page 8 See: MONEY

slothful.

After reading the majority of "Atlas Shrugged" I conclude that the writer is probably not a believer, not the same way that I am. She places objectivity above all things including The Almighty. My perspective is from a slightly different vantage point than hers. I disagree with her attitude of loving money---respect money, but don't love it. Later on in "Atlas Shrugged" in a imaginary perfect place (perfect in her own imagination) where all inhabitants are working for perfection, they must work and deserve everything that they have or that they obtain. The word give is not allowed. I differ greatly with this view, because if there is no giving, there can be no sacrifice, and when there is no sacrific, there can be no love. God is Love, and a place with out God has to be hell. I don't want anything to do with a place like that.

All these things are much food for thought. Bottom line, money is only a tool of trade and should be properly cared for, but not loved. It would seem to me that the evil is the improper use of a tool, not the tool. The tool is no more evil than a hoe to a gardener; although it is most useful and appreciated, it is seldom loved.

I recommend for reading the book Atlas Shrugged by Ayn Rand. Reading it has given me insight to some of the problems that we have right here in America, however one must realize that her perspective is from a very different vantage point. More importantly to be realized and remembered is that all good things come from God. Every ability that we have: the ability to love, to work, to think, to learn, to create wealth or to make money was first granted us by our Creator. We didn't just somehow conjure up all these abilities, they were graciously loaned to us by God the Creator of the Universe. Like the servants in the parable of the talents, we will be held accountable for how we use these---our God given abilities. \$\$\$

Final remarks by AWD

Trials & Tribulations Of A House Dog

Just because I'm a house-pet doesn't mean that I don't have very sensitive feelings. I may be the oldest and the smartest of all three of us Schnauzers, but that doesn't mean that I'm immune from feeling a little anxiety and rejection on occasion. First thing that caused me to feel shunned was that Camry showed up here with her hair all made up and a pretty ribbon in her collar. Before you knew it---less than three weeks later, Shelby was strutting around here with a new do like she was the Queen of Sheba. I was treated like some sort of leper for an additional three weeks waiting for my turn at the groomers. It was about all I could bear---those two were strutting their stuff singing "We Lookin' Good, We Lookin' Good." I was more than a little shaggy, I had lost my collar, and my self worth was in the doldrums. I felt more like one of those yard dogs that never get a bath much less a haircut. My hair wasn't matting together yet, but I was plenty rough looking. I certainly didn't feel very pretty, or very loved.

Well, when it finally was my turn, I was treated like some fence-jumping mongrel by the groomers. They made me so upset that I snapped at that woman, and she pulled hard on my ear until I almost passed out. I calmed down but it was a most humiliating experience, and I didn't recover until yesterday afternoon. I don't mind telling you that I just felt very down and out, like no one even cared if I were to live or die. Poor pitiful me. Well, the boss always said to just be patient and try to look at the bright side of the situation and things will brighten up before you know it. They started to brighten when I got home because all of a sudden everyone wanted to love on me and let me in their lap, but it still took another 24 hours before I was back to my normal self. I hope that they don't ever let that happen again. We used to go to the groomers all at once, but Linda complained about three being too much all at once.

There hasn't been too much going on around here except the same old thing. The boss is on the road his usual 4 days a week, and Linda hasn't had a outside-of-the-house job now in several months. She has this place looking better than it ever has and the boss is always telling her how proud he is of her.

They had some professional landscaper put in a couple trees in the front---Andy was over and said that they will never make it, but the boss disagrees.

That's it for this time, take care and keep wagging your tail! ♥ *Jasmine Doudney Schnauzer Dog*