Comment on the Commentary of the Day
by
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Disclaimer: The following “Letters to the Editor” were sent to the respective publications on the dates indicated. Some were printed but many were not. The original articles that are being commented on may or may not be available on the internet and may require registration or subscription to access if they are. Some of the original articles are syndicated and therefore may have appeared in other publications also.

8 January 2006
The Editor, New York Post
To the Editor:

The sensible message in George Will's column calling for government to stop "moralizing about so many things" ("Gov't. Made Morality," Jan. 8) was summarized beautifully by the late, great Hank Williams, Sr., in this verse from his song "Mind Your Own Business":

Mindin' other people's business seems to be high-tone;
I got all that I can do just to mind my own.
Why don't you mind your own business - mind your own business,
'Cause if you mind your business you'll stay busy all the time.

A. Barton Hinkle deserves applause for exposing the myths about Katrina's impact ("Ideological Blinders," Jan. 6, http://www.timesdispatch.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=RTD%2FMGArticle%2FRTD_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1128769126676&path=%21editorials%21oped&s=1045855935007). I grew leery of the mainstream account when I visited my hometown in November. As my family and I drove through desolate New Orleans, we were surprised to see that one of that city's most devastated sections - perhaps its most devastated section - is middle- and upper-middle-class Lakeview. Indeed, while even in the Ninth Ward some homes remain intact and occupied, we saw no such homes in Lakeview.

7 January 2006
The Editor, The Richmond Times-Dispatch
To the Editor:

The sensible message in George Will's column calling for government to stop "moralizing about so many things" ("Gov't. Made Morality," Jan. 8) was summarized beautifully by the late, great Hank Williams, Sr., in this verse from his song "Mind Your Own Business":

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6 January 2006
The Editor, The Washington Times
To the Editor:

"leadership role" in international negotiations to further open world trade ("Keeping DOHA alive," Jan. 6). Such negotiations are fine, but if President Bush were truly a principled leader he would ask Congress to remove all U.S. trade barriers and agricultural subsidies immediately and unconditionally. Not only would America's unilateral move to free trade benefit Americans and the world, it would set an unambiguous example of true leadership for politicians across the globe.

5 January 2006
The Editor, New York Times
229 West 43rd St.
New York, NY 10036
To the Editor:

Despite the deaths in the Sago mine, you shouldn't be so quick to demand further intervention by Uncle Sam into the coal industry ("Coal's Toll," Jan. 5). Government interventions are partly to blame for this tragedy.
Led by West Virginia Senator Robert Byrd, Washington for decades has artificially buoyed the Appalachian coal industry at the expense of the western coal industry. This intervention is shameful because not only is western coal cleaner (having lower sulfur content) than eastern coal, it is also extracted by surface-mining - which is less hazardous to workers than is the underground mining prevalent in Appalachia.

4 January 2006

Editor, The Washington Post
1150 15th St., NW
Washington, DC 20071

Dear Editor:

Why does Robert Samuelson describe dollars that foreigners don't spend on good and services, but that they instead invest in the U.S. economy, as "surplus" ("Waiting for a Soft Landing," Jan. 4)? These dollars are no more "surplus" to foreigners than dollars that we Americans save and invest are "surplus" to us.

4 January 2006

The Editor, The New York Post

To the Editor:

Justifying greater government intrusion into our lives, Arnold Ahlert asserts that "the first and foremost 'right' is the right to live" ("Wiretap Wake-Up Call," Jan. 4). I'm thankful that Americans of the founding generation thought differently. These were people, remember, who were inspired by Patrick Henry's demand to "give me liberty or give me death."

3 January 2006

The Editor, Boston Globe

To the Editor:

Among the downsides of the automobile, you say that "It pollutes the environment" ("Four-wheel nation," Jan. 3). Maybe not, at least compared to its alternative. Before the car, cities were polluted with horse manure.

2 January 2006

The Editor, The New York Times
229 West 43rd St.
New York, NY 10036

To the Editor:

Wal-Mart's Chairman wants the minimum wage raised so that more workers will be able to afford to shop at his stores ("States Take Lead in Push to Raise Minimum Wages," Jan. 2). Who knew that creating prosperity is so easy?! Now that word is out, the head of Toyota's Lexus division undoubtedly will press for an even larger hike in the minimum wage so that more workers will be able to afford his automobiles.

During the late 19th century, for example, up to 1.3 million pounds were dumped on New York City streets daily. In addition to attracting swarms of flies, dry weather turned this manure into wind-borne dust and wet weather whipped it into a foul, noxious ooze.