



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.

2 July 2006

Editor, The Washington Times

Dear Editor:

Alan Tonelson and Peter Kim illogically argue that, because manufacturing industries led U.S. economic growth in the past, the relative decline in U.S. manufacturing in recent years is an ill economic omen for Americans ("Manufacturing squeeze, July 2).

Would Tonelson and Kim argue also that, because railroads led the growth of the transportation sector 125 years ago, the decline of railroads in recent decades means that our transportation prospects

are endangered? Of course not. Americans are increasingly among the world's best service providers -- researchers, insurers, software designers; the list is long and growing. Our economy in general is no more threatened by growing imports of manufactured goods than our transportation sector is threatened by growing reliance upon air transportation.

29 June 2006

Editor, The Wall Street Journal
200 Liberty Street
New York, NY 10281

Dear Editor:

U.S. Trade Representative Susan Schwab correctly

argues that governments that lower trade barriers and reduce subsidies make their citizens wealthier ("More Trade, Less Poverty," June 29). But then she (apparently proudly) announces that Uncle Sam will not make further moves along these lines until other countries do so.

What gives? Why does our government knowingly dampen the growth of American prosperity just because other governments are equally inconsiderate of their citizens?

28 June 2006

Editor, The New York Post

Dear Editor:

You predict that Warren Buffett "will be remembered as an exemplary humanitarian" ("Buffett's Death-Tax Avoidance," June 28). Right.

But Mr. Buffett's greatest contribution to humanity will never be his philanthropy, however effective it is. His supreme contribution is his investment prowess - his skill and hard-work at directing capital to fruitful uses.

Although derided by many, such prowess is essential to keep ordinary workers productive and well-paid.

27 June 2006

Editor, The Washington Times

Dear Editor:

Ben Lieberman rightly praises the FTC for opposing price controls on

gasoline ("Is anti-gouging anti-consumer?" June 27). But he overlooks one benefit of such controls: easier lives for us economics professors.

Teaching about the role of market prices is tough work, and it's a lot tougher now that students haven't experienced the 1970s' long lines at gasoline stations. Such waiting lines reveal to students the bizarre and harmful consequences of government's visible foot - thus enabling them better to appreciate the beauty and benefits of the market's invisible hand.

26 June 2006

Editor, The Boston Globe

Dear Editor:

Seeking stricter controls on carbon emissions, you mention the "'hockey stick'" line reflecting centuries of temperature

stability and a sharp jag upward in recent years" ("A hockey stick wake-up," June 26). Also relevant is a second 'hockey stick' line - one that motivates many of us who worry that government action to curb global warming will create problems larger than the one it aims to solve.

That second line tracks human population. From 1,600 BC until the 19th century, population was flat, averaging much less than one billion. Then suddenly, starting around 1820, population began to soar. Modern industrial society - allegedly the source of dangerous global warming - is surely the source of prosperity that gives life literally billions of people who otherwise would never have been born or who would today be in their graves.