

Austro Libertarian



Ravages of (World) War

ECONOMICS

War as a government program suffers the tragedies of any other government program.

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HISTORY

On the non-interventionists of the interwar period: their warnings and vindication.

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INTERVIEW

A conversation with John Denson on The Costs of War and the prospects for peace.

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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

An unsolicited panoply of vital information.



1 WHERE WE FIT

We conceive of this publication as a midway between the quick and accessible commentaries of the blogosphere on one hand, and the vital academic journals such the Journal of Libertarian Studies and the Quarterly Journal of Austrian Economics on the other. Those wanting something deeper, but not quite the technical contributions of academia.

2 THE TYPE OF CONTENT

Not only do we want to produce essays relating to Austrian Economics and Rothbardian libertarian theory, we also want to include culture, sociology, history, etc. Eventually we will achieve graphics, artwork, and interactive features too.

3 THE STYLE OF CONTENT

Our tone is reflective and elegant, not academic or punchy. We don't seek to offer new contributions to the edifice, but to synthesize and reflect on previous advancements. We don't want merely to cover current events, but interact with meta-trends in light of our theory.

4 THE QUALITY OF CONTENT

Obviously, we need world class contributors and essays. We have to work our way to this. For one thing, we cannot yet pay for the content we must eventually produce. But stick with us. We'll get there.

5 ON THE MAG'S NAME

Many of our early subscribers love the name. We think it's a fantastic and precise phrase and are glad we control the domain- we will always use it in that regard. But for the publication itself, it does put a ceiling on our reach. We'll need something punchier, more interesting for those new to these ideas.

FAQs

1 ARE YOU SEEKING SUBMISSIONS?

Yes! We are not seeking fluff content or previously published online blogs. We need longform essays and other exclusive content that can be turned into informative features and graphics.

2 WHY DO YOU DO PRINT?

There is a rising trend of what we call "digital minimalism," a desire to escape the barrage of online noise. This is relevant both to consumers looking for periodic escapes, and our need to find a niche, premium platform for the display of our ideas.

3 CAN I DONATE TO THE CAUSE?

We highly encourage this. As you can see, we are initiating a very ambitious project. If you believe in it even half as much as we do, you will be motivated to support us. If you send us \$100 or more, we'll End the Fed by July. AustroLibertarian.com/support

4 WHAT ABOUT GIFT SUBSCRIPTIONS?

Please consider it! AustroLibertarian.com/magazine



“The moment war is declared, however, the mass of the people, through some spiritual alchemy, become convinced that they have willed and executed the deed themselves. They then, with the exception of a few malcontents, proceed to allow themselves to be regimented, coerced, deranged in all the environments of their lives, and turned into a solid manufactory of destruction toward whatever other people may have come within the range of the Government's disapprobation.”

Randolph Bourne

EDITORIAL

C. Jay Engel is the self-appointed founder and primary editor. He's on a quest to find a better name for AL Magazine.

Chris Calton is a 2018 Mises Institute Research Fellow and hosts the Mises Institute's Historical Controversies podcast.

Ben Lewis is the wisest of the bunch. He's opposed to iconoclasm unless it's directed at a Roosevelt.

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Jared Lovell calls himself a Tory Anarchist and wears a bowtie. Is a propagandist history teacher.

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With special thanks to: Tom Woods, Bionic Mosquito, Keith Strahan, Zachary Garrett, Luke Jain, Miles Brazil, Clark Davis, and the RL Group for their additional support, advice, and time. You made this happen.



Submissions for AL Mag

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Mission

The goal of this publication is to advance the Austro-Libertarian tradition of economic and political thought, especially as it has been articulated by Ludwig von Mises, Murray Rothbard, and Hans-Hermann Hoppe.

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Our Biases and Inclinations

We're passing this off as an editorial. It's more like a tirade.

Since it's already been paid for, the reader may be interested to know what they have gotten themselves into. "Who we are" sections are boring, no one really cares – but since it's the first issue, we may never again get this chance. So you can toss the rest of the magazine; this is what we really wanted you to read.

WE LIVE IN THE ERA OF STATISM. As the historian Ralph Raico has put it, “this has been the century of the State — of the rise and hypertrophic growth of the welfare-warfare state.” While speaking of the twentieth century, how much more applicable are his words as we near the completion of the first quarter of the twenty-first?

Libertarians see liberty as the antithesis of statism. If liberty is defined as the absence of coercion, of the initiation of aggression, then the institutionalization of that coercion, which is a key component of the definition of the state, is a threat that constantly undermines the existence of liberty.

The Austro-Libertarian case against statism is a sort of one-two punch in that it not only speaks to issues of justice and ethics in statism (the “libertarian” political theory part), but it also speaks to issues of prosperity and economic development in statism (the “Austrian” economic theory part). The Austro-Libertarian, therefore, criticizes the state for constantly and inherently breaching the property rights of individuals (an ethical issue) and for constantly and inherently undermining the wealth creation that benefits all of society over time (an economic issue).

Surrounding these two pillars of state-criticism are issues related to sociology, epistemology, ethics, psychology, praxeology, historiography, and everything in between. And the existing literature supporting and developing the Austro-Libertarian edifice is quite extensive; we should never be interpreted as going intellectually rogue; we stand on the shoulders of giants, we need them, we learn from them, we seek to elaborate, with caution and care, their trailblazing advances.

In this light, this Austro-Libertarian publication has chosen a particular tradition, or formulation, of anti-statism. Our approach to economic theory is more clear than the increasingly fuzzy phrase of “libertarianism.” Austrian economics, especially in the Mengerian tradition of Ludwig von Mises and Eugen Bohm-Bawerk, is *a priori* and built on the logical derivations of the fundamental elements of human action; individuals employing means in order to fulfill their chosen and desired ends. We therefore reject any temptation to make economics a testable, empirical, aggregate, and model-based science.

Among the broad usage of libertarianism, there are those who define it in vague terms and worse, mischaracterize it for public consumption. Thus, popular references to libertarianism as a moderate compromise of being “fiscally conservative and socially liberal” are tremendously unappealing to our mentality, demeanor, and aims. In our opinion, this bastardized version of libertarianism not only fails to do justice to the beauty and rigor of the Rothbardian libertarian tradition, but it also betrays more general social interests that we carry.

As human beings, not just libertarians, the editors and key team members of this publication also have a bias toward certain cultural elements. While libertarianism itself, being rationalistic and containing true propositions independent of cultural and social context, is neither “right nor left,” the social demeanor that we personally carry tends toward what might be considered an older “rightism.” Libertarianism, technically and purely defined, does not necessitate or obligate this position; but it represents our general and personal disposition. While there are no doubt healthy and productive disagreement and differences in each of us in this way, we nonetheless do not find attractive or tempting the stirring winds of social leftism.

We distrust the mob and the masses (Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn called this the “Menace of the Herd”) and are therefore attentive to the Jacobin-democratic language being employed by the new socialists. Further, we find no inherent problem with natural hierarchies based on individual differences and believe some cultural and social norms are more beneficial to civilization than others, though we reject any notion that these norms and hierarchies are by nature denied to, or are the exclusive property of, any single race or ethnicity.

We dissent from the obsession surrounding egalitarianism and the rising “political correctness” culture that swoons over diversity for diversity’s sake, that seeks to mandate multiculturalism in the misguided pursuit of homogeneity, and treats various “alternative” lifestyles as causes to be advanced. In this sense, we believe that libertarians should have biases toward cultural rightism, though we definitionally deny that libertarianism is itself rightism—for libertarianism is simply a certain body of propositions relating to the ethical legitimacy of coercion.

We formulate the relationship between libertarianism and cultural rightism as Hans-Hermann Hoppe does: Conservatism (which tends to be “empiricistic, sociological, and descriptive”) focuses on “families, authority, communities, and social ranks” while Austro-Libertarianism (which is “rationalistic, philosophical, logical, and constructivist”) focuses on the “concepts of property, production, exchange, and contract.” And therefore the former is the “concretization” of the latter. Conservatism needs a theory and libertarianism has practical expressions— that is, a natural and physical order.

Movements of the nominal right have failed tremendously in our time. Pop-conservatism as a brand is in a sorry state. Not only do they consistently, through time, always cater to whatever yesterday’s leftism happens to be, they have also successfully conserved almost nothing at all over the last 150 years. If conservatism desires to return to a “moral and cultural normalcy,” it needs libertarianism’s consistent and defensible anti-statism.

We therefore combine, in a sweeping outlook on our times, the intellectual rigor of the Austro-Libertarian framework with a guiding spirit that is motivated by our love of Western civilization, the furtherance of our prosperity, and the strength and harmony of the social communities in which we voluntarily engage. ■

— C. Jay Engel and Jared Lovell



April 1815 – July 1898

Otto Von Bismarck

"EUROPEAN BALANCE OF POWERS"

TIMELINE TO WORLD WAR ONE

May 1871

The Frankfurt Treaty: Prussian defeat of France and the stripping from France of Alsace and Lorraine and the rise of a German Empire disrupted the European balance of powers: the birth of a new Europe.

1871-1888

Prussian Otto von Bismarck pursues a framework of European peace to maintain new status quo (Second Reich)– treaties between Germany, Austro-Hungary, Russia; the several-times attempted "League of Three Emperors."

Oct. 1879

The Dual Alliance between Germany and Austro-Hungary; was impactful for the pre-War "Balance of Powers" European peace as it was a wall against Russian invasion into the west.

1882

Triple Alliance between Germany, Austria, Italy formulated in secret– protected Germany and Italy each against France and stipulated that Italy would remain neutral against Austria-Russian hostilities.

1888

Wilhelm II, grandson of British Queen Victoria and nephew of her successor Edward VII, becomes Kaiser of the German Empire. Has a longing for German-British unity, but anger against Edward and the British statesmen for the way he felt demeaned and patronised by the British.

1890

Chancellor Bismarck dismissed by the new Kaiser, who, devastatingly for the power balance, lets Bismarck's German-Russian peace treaty (Reinsurance Treaty) lapse.

1894

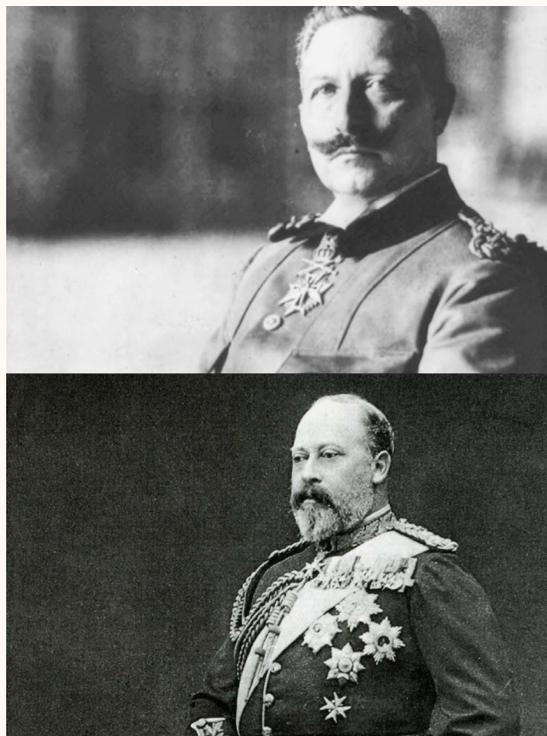
Russia shifts, seeks ally in France in new Dual Alliance which stipulates hostilities in case of mobilization by Germany, Austria, or Italy.

1890-1907

The slow transition away from the British older, more conservative, mentality of a "splendid isolation" in terms of European powers.

1890-1901

Germany and Britain unable to come to terms for a peaceful agreement of understanding; Britain had no interest in committing resources in case of German hostilities on the continent; Germany had no interest in helping Britain protect the African colonies.



Family Struggles

GERMANY: KAISER WILHELM II

Grandson of British Queen Victoria;
Longed for a German-English Empire

BRITAIN: KING EDWARD VII

Son of Queen Victoria, Uncle to Wilhem
Looked down on the Kaiser

1895

America teases at future war against Britain unless Britain accepts US arbitration in a border dispute in Venezuela; Britain capitulates to the US.

Jan. 1896

The Kaiser sends a telegram of congratulations to Boer leader Paul Kruger on his capture of the British Jameson raiders who had invaded the Transvaal, fomenting increased tension between Britain and Germany.

1898

Renewed talk in Britain of the prospects of a relationship with Germany, as Britain could not afford tensions with both Germany and France in Africa at the same time. Germany, given cultural and familial background, was the natural choice.

1898

Britain supports the US in the Spanish-American war and there is time of "Great Rapprochement" between the British and the Americans for the first time in a century.

1899

British Lord Salisbury and Joe Chamberlain seek agreement with Germany, stating that England, Germany, and America should work together to ensure the prevention of the much more dangerous Russian expansion.

1899

Germany presumes Britain would never enter treaty with France, makes high demand that Britain join Triple Alliance if agreement is possible. Britain refuses this, unwilling to make continental commitments to Austro-Hungary and Italy.

1899

Boer War reveals the extent to which Britain was without a formal alliance with the other great powers. British tendency toward European neutrality falls apart.

Jan. 1902

Anglo-Japanese treaty created to secure Britain's alliance with an Asian power, stipulating that should either country face war with two powers, the other was obligated to aid.

June 1902

The Triple Alliance is renewed including Italian commitment to aid Germany in case of military hostilities with France, a commitment which Italy contradicted with its own neutrality commitment to France.

“Personally, I believe there is no better argument against our intervention than a study of the causes and developments of the present war. I have often said that if the true facts and issues were placed before the American people, there would be no danger of our involvement.”

Charles Lindbergh



Wretched Entanglements

The Non-Interventionists of the WWII Era

Ben Lewis

No anti-war movement in American history has been as vilified as those lonely souls who opposed American entry into World War II. Activists like the anti-imperialists at the turn of the twentieth century have simply been forgotten, left to be neither condemned nor lauded by posterity. Others, like the opponents of the Vietnam War, have been positively, if partisanly, celebrated. But the active opposition to World War II enjoys no such luxuries. It was neither insignificant enough to be totally ignored, nor have its members been romanticized or praised. At best, the opponents of American participation in the war are said to have been on the wrong side of history. At worst, they are charged with being a Nazi fifth column undermining America from within.

THE AMERICAN NON-INTERVENTIONIST TRADITION

No group has been targeted with this latter smear more than the America First Committee, even though evidence in support of the accusation has never been obvious. Founded by a group of Yale University law students, including future President Gerald Ford, the committee boasted the membership or support of many prominent Americans, among them former President Herbert Hoover, later President John F. Kennedy, future Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart, publishers Robert McCormick and Joseph Patterson, business magnates General Robert E. Wood and

Sterling Morton, and military officers including Major (later General) Albert Wedemeyer.

The America First Committee was established in September 1940 to provide organized opposition to President Franklin Roosevelt's foreign policy, which members of the committee feared was steering the United States towards involvement in World War II. In arguing for staying out of the war, the committee appealed to what it said was the traditional American position on foreign wars.

"I believe in an impregnable national defense," the AFC's creed began, adding, "I believe we should keep our country out of the Old World's everlasting family quarrels." Reaching its crux, the creed stated, "I believe in the preservation of this Republic. Embroiled again in European affairs, we shall lose it. We shall be destroying the heritage our fathers fought for and sacrificed to leave us. In an effort to destroy totalitarianism, we shall be forced into totalitarianism ourselves. George Washington warned us of this day. His advice is better today than when he gave it."

This was a reference to George Washington's 1796 Farewell Address in which he struck a markedly similar chord. "Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground?" Washington had asked. "Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor or caprice?" He warned against "inveterate antipathies against particular nations, and passionate attachments for others" and pleaded instead for Americans to "[o]bserve good faith and justice towards all nations [and] cultivate peace and harmony with all."

A quarter century later, President James Monroe restated Washington's policy in a slightly amended form when he warned European nations that the United States would view their interference in the Americas unfavorably, but also promised that America would not take sides in European conflicts. Washington's Farewell Address and the Monroe Doctrine became the unofficial basis for American foreign policy for the remainder of the nineteenth century.

While Americans didn't apply this standard perfectly, neither did they go around the world seeking, in the words of President John Quincy Adams, "monsters to destroy." Adams predicted that once America departed from its non-interventionist path, she "would involve herself,



NO
FOREIGN
ENTANGLEMENTS

A TRAGEDY UNINTENDED: EUROPE GOES RED

BY C. JAY ENGEL

IT WAS AN AFTERNOON in March of 1917. Europe was still at war. Just a few weeks earlier, the Russian Czar Nicholas II capitulated in the face of a revolutionary Russia. The mood of the people in Russia was profoundly against the war effort, impoverished and aggravated as they were by the economic strains of a wartime economy. They blamed the international capitalists of course, and no longer found any reason why they should labor and struggle on behalf of an Allied power block that was so deeply entrenched in the very capitalism that was undermining the workers of the East. Such was the lens through which these agitated poor viewed the world.

From his exiled location across Europe in Switzerland, Vladimir Lenin, along with other radical Bolsheviks, would board a train back to their homeland, helped along by the German government, which coordinated the journey from Zurich to Sweden, and then over to Petrograd in Russia.

It was not the first time that Germany had sought such a covert operation. The German war strategists understood the value in fostering the internal conflicts of the enemy.

In 1915, as Russian expert Richard Pipes explains in his monumental 1990 book on the Russian Revolution, the Marxist strategist and enemy of the Russian Tsarist government, Alexander Parvus, appealed to Lenin that he must take advantage of the German-Russian conflict to use German protection as a means back to Russia; the Revolution, argued Parvus, needed him.

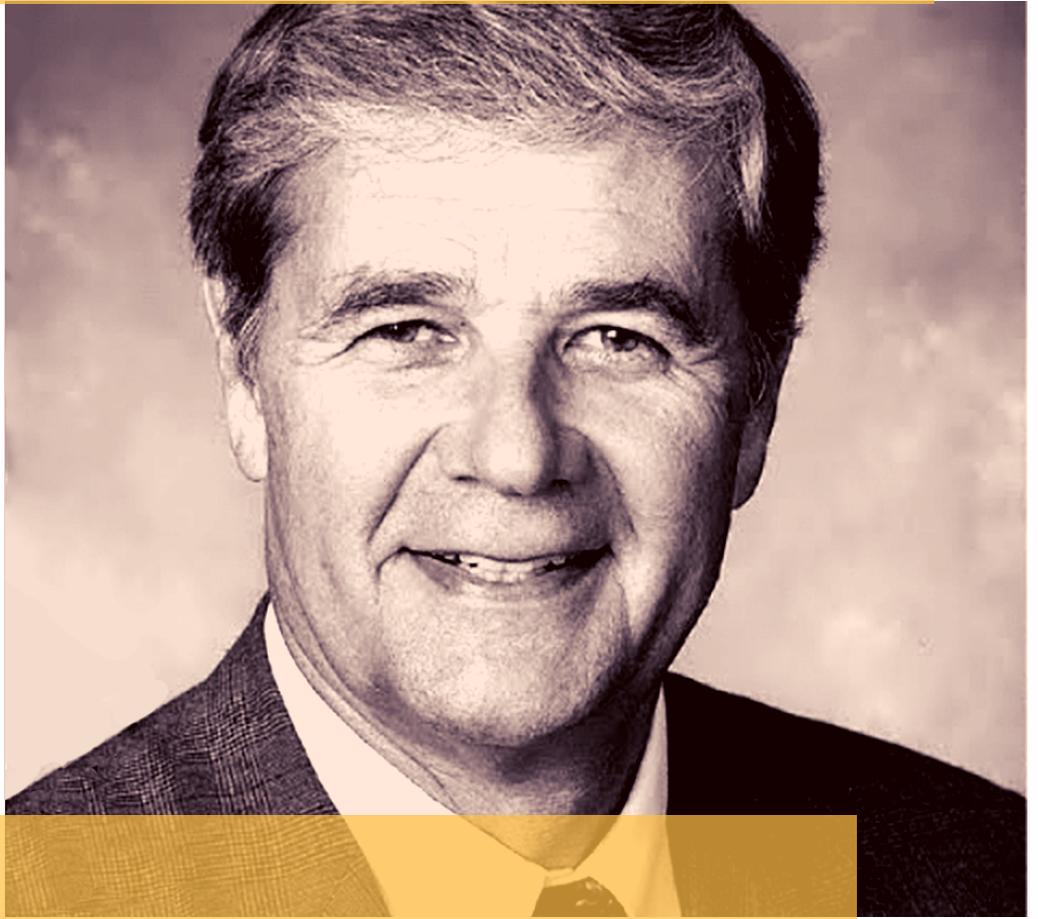
Lenin dismissed the plan. The Bolsheviks would never compromise, he responded, with any imperialist. The Revolution was a proletarian one and to appeal to the ideological enemy, not merely the Tsarist enemy, was to betray the spirit of the Bolshevik vision. By 1917, with the fall of the ancient Romanov dynasty, Lenin relented: the Greater Cause was too important. Marxism's moment had come and the Leninist Bolsheviks would be the vehicle.

The time was ripe for Lenin's journey. Lenin was the chief theoretician of the Bolshevik movement. He had taken the scientific socialism of Karl Marx and made it into a full fledged and particularly Russian strategy for communist victory. While he considered himself an orthodox Marxist, a

defender and proponent of Marx, his chief contribution to the development of Marxist strategy was that Communism must not wait for bourgeois acceptance. While Marx described what he considered the inevitable and "natural" evolution (to the extent that violence is ever natural evolution) of Communism's rise, Lenin was a man of action. Communism's time was now. It must be pushed by the proletariat, whether or not the bourgeois joined the effort.

An enemy of the Tsarist dynasty, Lenin had been thus cast away by the Empire for fear of threat against her stability. But now the Czar was gone, replaced by a Provisional Government that was allegedly for the people; though the Bolsheviks repudiated this replacement as a Bourgeois Reformism—definitely not what they revolted for.

Thus, the plan to smuggle Lenin back into Russia was too good to pass up. After all, Parvus would reason, Lenin was "much more raving mad" than other revolutionaries and it was therefore Lenin who would have the best chance to topple this Provisional Government. And so, Parvus brilliantly massaged his influence with a



QUARTERLY INTERVIEW

A CONVERSATION WITH JOHN DENSON

INTERVIEW BY C. JAY ENGEL

The libertarian tradition has brought together so many intellectual treasures. One of libertarianism's most distinctive, if not controversial, positions is its unyielding criticism of military adventurism. Against the most cherished and closely held tendencies of an American people swept by a culture war, the libertarian stands resolute in his dissent from the alleged glories and accomplishments of our wars. War is among the most important issues of our time.

To discuss this, we were pleased to sit down with the great John Denson, a board member at the indispensable Mises Institute.

He has edited and produced a number of important works, including *The Costs of War*, which motivated the present inaugural Spring issue. It brings together some of the greatest minds of our movement to look at war from social, economic, historical, and ethical angles. On its second edition, and twenty years in print, it remains a staple of libertarian antiwar theory and analysis.

DENSON'S BOOKS

Reassessing the Presidency
A Century of War
The Costs of War

"The Twenty-First Century must take the path less traveled and reverse the direction taken in the war-torn twentieth century, the bloodiest in history. We must learn to avoid war and develop a general will to peace."

C.JAY: Let's begin with war in general. You seem to have a special interest in war, in the impact that war has on society. Not only in economic terms, but also in terms of lives lost, psychological impact, the loss of freedom, and the degradation of culture itself. What drew you to war as an issue and have you always been critical of warring?

JOHN: No I have not always been critical of war and in fact, in World War II I was very young in the last three years of the war— at the age of 8, 9, and 10— and my family has been engaged in war since the American Revolution. My father was in World War I in France and I still have his helmet; and in World War II, my oldest brother was a P-51 fighter pilot; my first cousin was a B-17 pilot in England bombing Germany; another first cousin was a Naval Academy graduate and was a submarine commander in the Pacific; and my second cousin, Eugene Sledge, was a Marine in the major battles as a fox hole, hands on battler in the Pacific.

So every day, we played war and to me it was the most glorious, wonderful, exciting patriotic thing in the world. But there were about 4 or 5 steps that began to change my thinking; from glorifying war and being so thrilled by it.

The first was when I learned that my cousin Eugene, the Marine in the Pacific, was going to come live with us—we lived a few miles from Auburn University where he was attending. I was about 10 years old and was looking forward to this war hero living with us, it would be the most exciting thing in the world for me. But my parents sat me down and said that he had such a bad experience in the war with the horror of it all that he had these bad nightmares and that he didn't want to live in an apartment with other people— he needed to live with family who understood his problems. So I was told not to say *anything* about the war.

So, meal after meal, I would hope that he said something about the war, but there was never anything said. It wasn't until many years later that he called me and told me he was going to write his memoirs about what war was about. He wrote two books— one called *With the Old Breed*, which was the name of the Marine Division, and the other was *China Marine*. a movie was made about him and those books by Steven Spielberg and Tom Hanks called *Deep Pacific*; it was a 10-part series done on HBO.

So sitting there, I thought war was going to be a wonderful thing; but it turned out that what had happened to him psychologically was a terrible

thing. He recovered eventually, got a PhD and became a college professor of biology. And he and I have talked many times— he has an article, an essay, that he submitted for *The Costs of War* conference and book. He said that part of the way he overcame the horrors of the war was reading and studying science— and that's what he went into— and listening to Mozart.

That was the first stage where I began to see that war is not at all that great.

The next stage came when I was in high school— I was the commanding officer in my ROTC unit when the Korean War was going on. Senator Robert Taft was running for president and he began to talk about how the Korean War was unconstitutional; it was illegal. And I began to worry about trusting our government, that they would get us into an unconstitutional war and I felt sure that I would be drafted and have to fight in that war.

The next step was years later when I had already graduated from law school. In the 1960s I became very interested in the libertarian movement, mainly through free market economics. I got this tape of a recording by a fellow named Percy Greaves—

Review of *America's War for the Greater Middle East* by Andrew J. Bacevich
 Publisher: Random House
 Date: April 5, 2016

How We Got Here

by Ben Lewis

IT HAS BEEN SAID that for most Americans history began on September 11, 2001. The terrorist attacks perpetrated on that day seemed like a bolt out of the blue to an American population not given to introspection. What mattered in the days and years that followed 9/11 was not the history of the United States' involvement in the Middle East, the region from which the terrorists came, but the raw facts of who did what that day and what the collective “we” would do about it.

But history did not begin on 9/11. In truth, the history of America's actions in the Middle East in the years before that day held critical contextual information that, if considered, would have aided in both correctly diagnosing the reasons for the attacks and recognizing the appropriate course of action in response to them. But this history was not considered, neither immediately after 9/11 nor at any step along the way since.

In his book, *America's War for the Greater Middle East*, Andrew Bacevich brings to light the full history of America's four decade (and counting) war in the Middle East. Bacevich, a West Point Graduate, retired Army colonel, historian and political conservative, is a uniquely qualified voice on foreign policy matters, particularly for conservatives who are conditioned to believe that war and foreign policy critics are always anti-troop leftists. Bacevich's extensive resume obviously frees him from such accusations. Bacevich uses this freedom to explore not only the details of America's interventions, but also the successes, and lack thereof, that those interventions have achieved.

Bacevich traces the genesis of America's War for the Greater Middle East to President Jimmy Carter who, in response to the energy crisis of the late 1970s, determined the flow of oil out of the Middle East to be critically important to the American way of life. The idea that American interventions in the Middle East have been “wars for

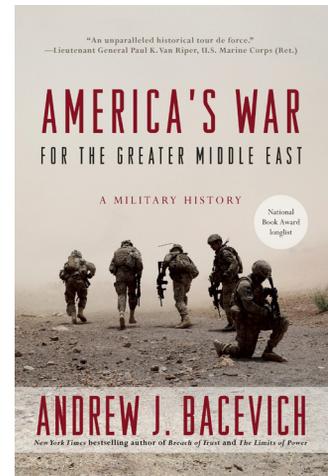
oil” has subsequently become a point of contention, but, as Bacevich shows, American policy-makers, including Carter, were candid about oil's centrality to America's Middle East policy at the outset of its large-scale involvement in the region.

Another key factor leading to American interest in the Middle East was the Soviet Union's war in Afghanistan, which Carter's successor, Ronald Reagan, saw as both a threat and an opportunity – a threat by the Soviets to the oil which the U.S. so desperately wanted and an opportunity to wage a proxy war against America's chief antagonist.

This combination of factors led to two critical decisions in the late 70s and early 80s: the casting of revolutionary Iran as America's preeminent regional enemy and supporting radical militants in Afghanistan's resistance to the Soviets. The first, itself a consequence of America's support for Iran's repressive ruler, the Shah, would ultimately lead to the U.S. giving aid and support to Saddam Hussein's Iraq in its war with Iran. The second would lead to the birth and growth of militant Afghan rebels groups. Both decisions would have consequences far beyond what the American foreign policy establishment predicted and planned for.

As Bacevich notes, between the beginning of Carter's presidency and the end of Reagan's, the United States inserted itself into Middle Eastern matters in not only Afghanistan and Iran, but also Iraq, Libya and Lebanon (where, conservatives would be surprised to learn, Israel repeatedly proved itself to be a thorn in Reagan's side with actions that ranged from lying about its military intentions to facilitating murderous violence towards civilian refugees in Lebanon to armed standoffs with American military units).

Even so, by 1988 there was some reason to believe that American policy in the region had been successful, even



WILL THIS PUBLICATION PLAY A ROLE IN THE YEARS TO COME?

And so you have it. The very first print edition, and really the very first full issue; as the initial “practice” issue was just that. On one hand, I err on the side of the self-critical; my high-minded visions of what this entire endeavor could be, standing to taunt our flawed first run. On the other hand, I could not be more proud of this simple accomplishment as I initiate the unnerving activity of exposing our work to the subscribers; a group of subscribers who have over the last three months received promise upon assurance that this would be worth their money and risk.

This issue opened with the editorial, let it now be closed with the personal. To borrow a phrase from libertarian movement history, “why the futile crusade?” What is all this for? A quick glance around at the world as it is, those predisposed to social pessimism have plenty to which they can point. Just as we are going to print, for instance, there is a lengthy essay in *Jacobin Magazine* celebrating the insurgent interest in the China 1919 May Fourth student revolution among the youth of the West.

Jacobin Mag to me represents the deepest motivation for this project. Those who have followed me over the years (people need better hobbies), understand the extent to which I have investigated, studied, and absorbed the brand and content of Jacobin (or maybe it is I who needs a better hobby). This publication effort is an outpouring of my swelling frustration. What Jacobin has done is provided a bridge platform between the punchy and agitating world of the online socialist blogosphere and the

more academic journals of the Marxists intellectuals (such as the Jacobin Foundation’s own Catalyst Journal). And they are good at it; very good.

We have our online articles and blogs (Mises Wire, FEE, LRC, etc), and we have our academic journals (Quarterly Journal of Austrian Economics, the newly relaunched Journal of Libertarian Studies, etc.)– but there was a need for our own bridge, analogous to Jacobin. The essays therein would be more elegant, not seeking either to comment on the daily current events about which we are all getting tired, but neither seeking to contribute new advancements to the doctrinal edifice of the Austro-Libertarian tradition. We rather wanted to synthesize and reflect, analyze at a more meta-level, and explain and apply the ideas that we know and love.

Moreover, there is a rising generation of young Austro Libertarian scholars and students with magnificent minds; individuals who will– and must!– carry the torch in new ways and to broader audiences. One day, hopefully soon, this will be among the most important outlets for their own analysis and commentary. The journals associated with the Mises Institute will remain the most important. But something needs to be secondary does it not?

At a more personal level and at the risk of offending good people I have gotten to know over the years, I do not place much hope in libertarianism as a political movement. What we don’t need is a whole slew of political activists. That ship has

sailed. In fact, part of my vision with this publication is to encourage us to think beyond politics. Dissenting, nullifying, and seceding from the federal government is great; but in so many ways, these tendencies need to be applied to culture, education, and one’s professional life as well. The concept of the “post-political,” then, is tremendously appealing.

Though politics is fascinating and worth comment, even analysis (would that we could find and employ a student of the political theater like Murray Rothbard!), in the end, we must rise above it. Not merely as libertarians. But as humans. Politics is bad for the soul; it’s bad for the children.

While we live in the world of the viral social media, I believe there is still room for critical commentary; for the long-form written word. I believe in the power and influence of a carefully constructed and beautiful symphony of sentences. I also believe that the content must be presented elegantly and with a flair of enthusiasm. *Jacobin Magazine* has taught me this.

Can you help me? Spread the word, buy a gift subscription, donate to our cause (I’m serious about this– do you want to see this magazine reach its potential?). Improvements in quality and reach have financial costs. I can’t promise that we’ll win. But I can promise that you will have great content as we enter the uncertainties of a world yet unknown.

Until the summer,
C.Jay Engel

“War is harmful, not only to the conquered but to the conqueror. Society has arisen out of the works of peace; the essence of society is peacemaking. Peace and not war is the father of all things. Only economic action has created the wealth around us; labor, not the profession of arms, brings happiness. Peace builds, war destroys.”

Ludwig von Mises

