

## Lincoln Review Commentaries — March-April 2006

### COMMENTARY #1

Africa and the U.S. suddenly find themselves on the “fast track” for African progress with the new Liberian President at the helm. Hi! This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington D.C. I’ll return in a moment with my commentary....

#### (SPONSOR BREAK)

It isn’t everyday – or even any day – that a Google Internet search for an African leader’s biography turns up this sort of description: “Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, divorced mother of four boys and grandmother to six children is Liberia's first elected female president, as well as the first elected female leader on the continent.” Furthermore, not since former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, has such a foreign leader, man or woman from any country, made such a powerful impression on the American power elite in Washington.

As the *Wall Street Journal* editorially observed, following a meeting of their editors with her in New York, where she also addressed a session of the United Nations,: “What a refreshing difference from some other African leaders, who blame the West for every trouble. Asked if she believed the U.S. owes Liberia anything, she said flatly, ‘No.’”

Liberia was established in 1822, as a project launched on behalf of former American slaves sent back to Africa by American abolitionists and some anguished slave-owners, who wished to end slavery in the U.S. but hoped to avoid the burden, in the event of complete abolition, of taking care of vast numbers of uneducated, unsophisticated and ill-prepared men, women and children of African slave origin or descent.

The subsequent history of Liberia, especially in very recent years, has been an unhappy saga for the most part, featuring dictators, civil wars, black African class warfare and frequent chaos.

## Lincoln Review Commentaries — March-April 2006

### Page 2 – Commentary #1

Ellen Johnson was born October 29, 1938, in the Liberian capital of Monrovia. She was a direct descendant of American slaves, thus has been labeled derisively by those who consider themselves indigenous, as an *Americo-Liberian* and an elitist. She thinks the label is undeserved and totally without merit any longer. By the time she was 17, in 1955, she had achieved exceptional grades in basic accounting and economics courses at Monrovia's College of West Africa. It was then that she married James Sirleaf and came to the U.S. in 1961 to study and obtain a degree from the University of Colorado so that in further study in 1969-71, she could earn her Masters at Harvard in public administration.

She then returned to Liberia to serve in the government as Minister of Finance but by 1973, Mrs. Sirleaf disagreed with the country's spending policies and relinquished her government position. Following a 1980 military coup, Mrs. Sirleaf fled into exile in Kenya where she soon became Director of Citibank in Kenya's capital, Nairobi. When the military lifted the ban on politics she returned to campaign against their leader but as soon as he was reelected, she again was forced into exile and resumed holding top banking positions with Citibank in Nairobi and with the Equator Bank in Washington.

More years of violent civil war and bitter factional fighting in Liberia that spilled over the border to some of its neighbors made it impossible for Mrs. Sirleaf to return but during the 1990s she became Assistant Administrator and then Director of the United Nations Development Program Regional Bureau for Africa – equivalent to the post of an Assistant Secretary-General of the UN. She returned to Liberia in the late '90s, helped the UN and other African states to remove dictator Charles Taylor and campaigned successfully for the Presidency in 2005. She is determined to solve some of Liberia's economic problems, strengthen the rule of law and push for her peoples' support of the country's constitutional principles. She hopes Liberia can become a role model for Africans. This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C.

## **Lincoln Review Commentaries — March-April 2006**

### **COMMENTARY #2**

I learned way back in Sunday School and from my parents and my grandparents, “sow you sow, sow you reap,” and “the more you give, the more you get.” Hi! This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C. I’ll return in a moment with my commentary....

### **(SPONSOR BREAK)**

The principle behind that little rhyme was that God rewards a cheerful giver and an individual who uses his or her God-given talents and resources will be blessed or given more by God. Indulge me for a bit if you will.

Well over two decades ago, I had the opportunity to volunteer as a board member of the Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind (CLB) in Washington, D.C. I must say it has been one of the best experiences in my life – and I have had plenty. What began as an effort to assist the visually impaired and blind people in the national capital area allowed me to meet another large group of individuals who soon became close and personal friends.

One such fellow board member was a prominent banker in D.C., John Thompson. A tall, distinguished and personable member, John was the father –in-law of a man who would become a very good friend of mine. Gerard Francis Schiappia died recently at the young age of 67(?). I say “young” because the father-in-law, John is still going strong. John walked down the aisle of the Great Falls, Va. Lutheran Church for the funeral service at the ripe age of 97. Unfortunately, John now has vision problems of his own and needed some assistance in that regard. Gerry Schiappia and I hit it off as soon as we met through a mutual friend who at the time was his neighbor in Mclean, VA. Conversation took us to the CLB and Gerry mentioned that his father-in-law was on the CLB board.

## Lincoln Review Commentaries — March-April 2006

### Page 2 – Commentary #2

That carried the talk further. I then discovered that Gerry had been a staffer on Capitol Hill and that he and I knew many of the same GOP people. The Parkers, Schiappias and the Thompsons occasionally visited. Gerry's lovely and gracious wife, Jane, is a well-known interior designer. Gerry introduced me to legendary TV pioneer Tex McCreary who was then head of the Dwight David Eisenhower Centennial Commission. McCreary anointed me a member of the Commission on the spot and gave me one of the newly minted commemorative coins as a keepsake. Gerry invited me to lunch one day to ask if I was interested in serving on the board of a new company that was being formed by the giant Turner Construction Company. He was then with Turner in their Homeland Security division. Ours was a fine friendship, indeed, and I shall really miss his company.

Now, if you will forgive me, a word about someone else who has passed away recently. Dana Reeve, the widow of Hollywood "Superman" and valiant paraplegic rehabilitation icon Christopher Reeve, was struck down by lung cancer March 6 at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Medical Center in New York. She was only 44 and never smoked. Their son, Will and Dana's two step-children survive.

When her husband was injured in a horse-riding accident in 1995, his young, vibrant and beautiful wife abandoned her promising career as an actress to devote full-time to Christopher's efforts to cope with severe spinal cord injuries – his own and all others. They established the Christopher Reeve Foundation and when her husband died in 2004, Dana took over the chairmanship. With her tragic death, the Foundation will continue as a memorial to both of the Reeves, helping in the funding of research regarding spinal injuries and in developing therapies to help patients fight to regain some use of their limbs and cope with paralyses.

This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C.

## Lincoln Review Commentaries — March-April 2006

### COMMENTARY #3

Some of the mourners and eulogizers at the funeral of Coretta Scott King seemed inclined to suggest she was simply a creation of her husband's fame. Hi! This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review Washington, D.C. I'll return in a moment with my commentary....

#### (SPONSOR BREAK)

I am fascinated by the mythology that springs up in our imaginative political circles regarding our fading or dying celebrities. Think for just a moment of two American women of some note and their remarkably parallel lives. So much has been written regarding the recent death of Mrs. King, I prefer to consider her passing to be an excellent opportunity to review how similar her life was to that of Hillary Rodham Clinton. Both women were their own well-established persons, from relatively affluent backgrounds, long before they met their respective celebrity-to-be husbands.

And I just wish the *feministas* of the Left would not insist on forgetting that behind every successful man may be a very successful woman just as the reverse is true. What I've mentioned about Coretta Scott and Hillary Rodham ought never to be forgotten. To do otherwise discredits their own personas and true accomplishments.

For instance, we know that Mrs. Clinton was raised in a conservative Republican family in Illinois and she was a "Goldwater Girl" in the 1964 national presidential campaign against Lyndon B. Johnson. She and her family were also prominent United Methodist parishioners in the affluent suburbs of Chicago.

Mrs. Clinton eschewed her political upbringing by the time she entered college. She reportedly embraced the liberal-leftist ideology in U.S. politics during her undergraduate and law school years. She toiled on behalf of the Black Panthers and other anti-establishment causes.

## Lincoln Review Commentaries — March-April 2006

### Page 2 – Commentary #3

By the time Hillary met William Jefferson Clinton she had a full-fledged left-wing view of America and the world. One has a right to assume that her willingness to relocate in Arkansas (compared to suburban Illinois, Boston or other sophisticated centers) may well have had a strategic purpose.

Of course, I'm connecting the dots as best I can – since no one can read the mind (thank the Lord) of another. I just cannot resist attempting to explain and compare the way the lives of two prominent American women – one black and one white – were so similar.

These ladies were self-starters and they both had the “smarts” to examine availabilities and eventually hitch their wagons to the proverbial stars. But the stars they chose weren't figuring in the firmament when Coretta and Hillary spotted their choices.

Perhaps you recall that Coretta Scott King was the daughter of a prosperous storekeeper in Marion, Alabama. According to one biographer she was “attractive and endowed with charm and intelligence...” and getting on with her life long before there was a “public” Martin Luther King, Jr. For instance, it was while attending Antioch that Coretta Scott became associated with groups such as the Women's Strike for Peace, a pacifist and unilateral disarmament outfit. Her major at Antioch was music and it was when she moved on to the Boston Conservatory for a graduate degree in music that she first met Martin Luther King, Jr.

After their marriage, the world conveniently forgot – if in fact they even knew – that Coretta had quite an activist life of her own before she met the man who would become her husband and certainly long before he became identified with his relatively minor role in initiating the “Montgomery Bus Boycott.”

Some analyst, some day, may see merit in reflecting more on such parallel lives. It should make quite a subject for study. This is Jay Parker from the Lincoln Review in Washington, D.C.

## Lincoln Review Commentaries — March-April 2006

### COMMENTARY #4

Thanks to historian and marketing specialist Claude Johnson's fine research, we now know how important blacks were in the beginnings of basketball. Hi! This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C. I'll return in a moment with my commentary....

#### (SPONSOR BREAK)

Claude Johnson is a researcher with a special focus on blacks in basketball history and Martin Johnson, apparently no relation and a New York writer on both music and the hoops game, has recently told readers of the *Wall Street Journal* about him. Like those associated with this newsletter, it seems quite likely many of our listeners are only hazily aware, if at all, that the game of basketball was invented in 1891 by James Naismith.

Yet, by the turn into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the sport was already popular along the East Coast and spreading West. The first professional team emerged in 1898 in Trenton, New Jersey. Black teams with the fun of the new sport on their minds, and possibly some nascent professional aspirations, cropped up in New York, Pittsburgh, Washington and Chicago in the second decade of the 1900s and out to Los Angeles and San Francisco by the 1920s. They were often invited to play as part of an evening of ballroom entertainment, some years before the formation of the famous Harlem Globetrotters whose first players were from teams in the Chicago area.

Organizations, civic associations, fraternal groups and sororities would hold big ballroom entertainment parties featuring some dancing, jazz or big band music. Then would come a break in festivities while two basketball teams would take to the floor and the assembled spectators would enthusiastically view the game. The sport then literally used baskets. Referees had to poke a long stick up to pop the ball out of the basket after each score.

## Lincoln Review Commentaries — March-April 2006

### Page 2 – Commentary #4

Many, if not most, of these early teams consisted of a handful of black men, in inter-city and inter-community leagues known as the “Black Fives.”

Matt Zeysing, the historian-archivist at the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, Massachusetts, says (and I quote): “Not unlike today, the early game of basketball had a far-reaching impact on everyone involved – those who played, those who watched, and those individuals or organizations that profited from it.” (end of quote)

After basketball’s invention, it quickly became a favorite sport in YMCA gyms and a variety of athletic clubs that sprouted up around the country. Claude Johnson indicates that in 1904, a Harvard graduate in physical-education, Edwin Henderson, first introduced the game to black students in Washington, D.C.

Henderson also organized the first all black league – the Interscholastic Athletic Association – in 1906. Such scholastic teams and leagues then quickly followed in other East Coast cities and in 1908 the first Colored Basketball World Championship was won by a team in Brooklyn, New York, known as the Smart Set Athletic Club. Among the early black players who went on to success in totally unrelated fields were the singer and actor Paul Robeson and baseball stars Jackie Robinson and Negro League baseball star Cumberland Posey.

Integration in basketball first emerged in the early 1940s, possibly because World War Two’s military draft was taking so many athletes to war zone duties. The then budding National Basketball League and the Basketball Association of America both opened their ranks to black teams and individual black players. The move was so successful and largely non-contentious that when the two leagues merged into the NBA in 1949, full integration was an unquestioned fact of life.

This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C.

## **Lincoln Review Commentaries — March-April 2006**

### **COMMENTARY #5**

In Chicago, these days, it's all about language and one of them is one of the hardest to teach and to learn. Believe it or not, it's Chinese. Hi! This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C. I'll return in a moment with my commentary....

#### **(SPONSOR BREAK)**

A computer guru friend recently forwarded an article from the publication, "Wired Magazine" that really got my attention. It was about the teaching of languages in our elementary schools, and most specifically what is going on in Chicago in mid-America. It is one thing to recognize the rapid increase in our Spanish-speaking population, especially since 12 million undocumented, illegal immigrant Hispanics have infiltrated since Ronald Reagan was President. In consequence of that reality, Spanish is being taught in many schools throughout the nation, beginning in kindergarten. Police forces in New York and other major cities are being required to take Spanish language courses in order to understand complaints and disputes in neighborhoods where English is not fully prevailing.

But now go to Chicago and see what is happening! Thirty-five hundred students from kindergarten to the 12<sup>th</sup> Grade in the Windy City are studying Mandarin Chinese. They are doing this as the result of the salesmanship of one man seven years ago. That was when Robert Davis, then freshly returned from a post-college tour of duty studying Chinese and teaching English in China, persuaded the administrator of Chicago's Public School system to get a jump on the rest of America in preparation for China's escalating emergence as a world economic powerhouse in trade and commerce. There is no question there is a need for young Americans who can speak and write fluently and capably in Chinese. Nothing impedes negotiations for business ties and contracts with Chinese more than does an American's inability to master the Chinese language.

## Lincoln Review Commentaries — March-April 2006

### Page 2 – Commentary #5

It is very hard to rely on interpreters and somewhat shameful for American businessmen to deal with key executives in Beijing or Shanghai or myriad other cities on the China mainland who will not, or simply cannot, speak or even try to understand English.

The author of the Wired article, Michael Erard, notes that the Chinese Government is busily coordinating and encouraging the teaching of Chinese throughout the world. They even have a bureau – the National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language - set up in Beijing to promote interest in learning Mandarin throughout the world. And China is making progress in this campaign. The teaching and study of the language is now required of all students in South Korea and Thailand since both nations are increasingly dependent on access to China's business for their own economic growth.

In France and Germany and to a somewhat lesser extent throughout Europe, courses in Chinese – both spoken and written – are now offered. Beijing authorities estimate the 30 million non-Chinese are now studying Mandarin globally. The Chinese office in charge of promoting the teaching of foreigners says this number will be increased to 100 million by 2010. China is currently spending \$25 million a year on the project. Mandarin is the number one primary language in the world with 500 million more people speaking it than speak English even though English is considered by many in the world community as the “language of business,” the language pilots and air flight controllers must use and the principal language in Internet use. Mandarin Chinese is Number Two in Internet use.

More than 1,000 Chinese volunteer teachers have been sent abroad to Europe, Africa, Southeast Asia and Latin America, very much like European colonial powers and America encouraged missionaries and other volunteers to spread instruction in English to the Far East, Africa and the other Americas between the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup>.

This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C.

## Lincoln Review Commentaries — March-April 2006

### COMMENTARY #6

If the rising cost of gasoline is draining your cash flow, don't blame big oil, the oil-rich Middle East, or the White House and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Blame Congress! Hi! This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C. I'll return in a moment with my commentary....

#### (SPONSOR BREAK)

Blaming Congress for the resumption of spiking prices at gas pumps is a little too easy and not entirely fair. We ought to be blaming tort lawyers whose lobby dominates many in our Congress. For it is the tort lawyers who have so threatened and targeted petroleum refiners for their use of an oxygen fuel-additive called MTBE.

This has now forced refiners to forego further use of MTBE which some environmental activists claim is contributing to chemical contamination of ground water, among other alleged sins. Of course, we can thank some of those same environmentalists for demanding the introduction and use of MTBE a few years back as a means of reducing carbon dioxide emissions from automobiles into the upper atmosphere where global warming is supposed to be endangering Earth's environment. Talk about Catch 22!

One of the principal reasons Congress has been authorizing bigger and bigger appropriations to encourage the use of ethanol, derived from organic food products such as corn and sugar, and soy-diesel fuel from soybeans, is to provide a "clean" organic additive to reduce gasoline usage while America's motor-driven economy stays on the move.

But with tort lawyers breathing down refiners' necks with lawsuits, Congress purposely skipped granting any immunity to MTBE producers and sellers from such legal harassment. Meanwhile, the national production of organic additives, expands slowly. Full ethanol and soy-diesel production are still a few years from meeting motorist demands at virtually every gas station throughout the nation..

## Lincoln Review Commentaries — March-April 2006

### Page 2 – Commentary #6

The gasoline refining industry and distributors and retailers have had to rapidly use up dwindling supplies of environmentally-approved, additive-enriched gasoline to cope with demands on the one hand and avoid lawsuits on the other.

In a March 28 editorial, the Wall Street Journal noted, ominously (and I quote):

“The average U.S. retail pump price for gasoline has been hovering around \$2.50 a gallon the past few weeks....The federal Energy Information Administration (EIA) has warned this may only be the beginning, and parts of the country could see pump prices well over \$3 a gallon going into summer. Happy Memorial Day!” (end quote)

While ignoring the MTBE liability concerns, reports the Journal, “Capitol Hill...created the conditions for this mess last summer with its latest energy bill.” Congress now requires that by 2012, U.S. car and truck drivers must consume 7.5 billion gallons of ethanol and soy-diesel fuel. So six years before the mandate becomes effective, the Congressional refusal to interfere with their tort lawyer friends or, at least, help refiners ward off lawsuits for continuing use of MTBE, Congress has actually spiked motor fuel in a big way.

Adds the Journal: “According to a February EIA report, ethanol production is already running near its capacity of 283,000 barrels a day. Yet ‘about 130,000 barrels per day of additional ethanol may be needed to replace the MTBE currently used’ in gas.”

Bob Dinneen of the Renewable Fuels Association who favors ethanol use, told the Journal that “his industry cannot make up the shortfall,” any time soon. According to a March 30 report in USA Today, Dinneen says 33 new ethanol plants are under construction and some of the 97 already operating are expanding their output. However, another impediment to meeting demand is that most ethanol is produced in the Middle West while the biggest demand is in the Northeast and deep South because of clean-air regulations. In this election year, Congress will have to do some explaining to motorists. This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C.

## Lincoln Review Commentaries — March-April 2006

### COMMENTARY #7

Remember the “Fairness Doctrine” that for nearly 40 years kept a lid on broadcasters’ free speech rights under the thumb of the FCC? Well, it may be brought back. Hi! This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C. I’ll return in a moment with my commentary....

#### (SPONSOR BREAK)

Last November, in a speech prepared for a forum on “The News Media Today,” longtime liberal essayist, jazz music authority and featured columnist Nat Henthoff of the New York journal, *Village Voice*, provided this dire warning regarding the Federal Communication Commission’s one-time “Fairness Doctrine”: “There is, today, a rising campaign – mostly from the left – to bring it back.” ‘

The forum was held at the campus of Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, Michigan, November 13-17, 2005, and Henthoff’s address explained the history and abusiveness of the Doctrine from its inception in 1949 to the FCC’s repudiation of it in 1987. The Doctrine had been adopted by an over-zealous FCC which claimed back then that it was seeking to provide balanced opinions and a wider diversity of viewpoints on the radio and then emerging television over which FCC had licensing authority and oversight responsibility.

Stations around the nation, on virtually any listener’s complaint, could be reprimanded and perhaps fined or otherwise punished by the FCC, often leading to unfavorable publicity which, in turn, could reduce the station’s appeal to advertisers. In cases where complaining organizations and their lobbyists, or politically powerful individuals, launched tougher campaigns against a station’s expressed opinions, the station’s license could be in jeopardy and in a few cases actually withdrawn, putting the station out of business. Henthoff recalled: “One famous victim of the Fairness Doctrine was Radio Station WXUR, controlled by Reverend Carl McIntire, a fiery right-wing fundamentalist preacher.” The station lost its license in 1972.

## Lincoln Review Commentaries — March-April 2006

### Page 2 – Commentary #7

The case that upheld this action by the FCC was *Brandywine-Main Line Radio, Inc. v. Federal Communications Commission*. Henthoff recalled that “a dissenting judge on the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, David Bazelon, sided with the extinguished radio station. The FCC, he said, had deprived the listeners to WXUR of that broadcaster’s ideas, ‘however unpopular and divisive we might judge those ideas to be.’ Broadcasting its ideas, Mr. Bazelon held, was WXUR’s First Amendment right.”

Before founding the Lincoln Institute, this broadcaster was one of those affected by the heavy-handed action of the FCC in 1969. That was when the FCC commissioners overruled their hearing examiner for the first time in the agency’s history. Three of us in Philadelphia were then hosting a talk program reflecting conservative, left-leaning and middle of the road viewpoints. My position was and always has been, that either the First Amendment means what it says, and is rightly defended, or newspapers and all other print publications of opinion should be so licensed. .

Thanks to resistance by some of us engaged in broadcasting, such as this writer and Nat Henthoff who, while working at WMEX in New York, felt the sting of FCC harassment for expressing opinions, the FCC in 1987 decided that government intrusion into broadcast content under the Fairness Doctrine, wrongly restricted freedom of expression and should be abolished.

But now, says Henthoff, in the May 2005 edition of the magazine, *In Those Times*, University of Michigan professor of communications, Susan Douglas wrote that since there are now so many conservative commentators and talk-show hosts dominating the airwaves, the federal government should again intervene to give liberals equal time. And in 2004, said Henthoff, a book by two liberal spokesmen suggested that the FCC should insist that conservative broadcasters present alternative views to those uttered or quoted that reflect conservative opinions. The Left never quits, does it?

This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C.

## Lincoln Review Commentaries — March-April 2006

### COMMENTARY #8

Maybe it is time to seriously consider what is now being proposed as the “Fair Construction Amendment.” It was an idea first put forth by the early Chief Justice John Marshall. Hi! This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C. I’ll return in a moment with my commentary....

#### (SPONSOR BREAK)

The fifth Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, John Marshall who served from 1801 to 1835, contended that judicial power under our nation’s Constitution had no authorized existence independent of the laws enacted by the elected representatives of the American people, other than to determine the constitutionality of such laws. This is what is meant by the term “strict constructionist” when applied to members or nominees to seats on the highest court in the land.

Said Justice Marshall: “A constitution intended to endure for ages to come and, consequently, to be adapted to the various crises of human affairs...’ does not contain the most distant allusion to any extension by construction of the powers of Congress. Its sole purpose is to remind us that a constitution cannot possibly enumerate the means by which the powers of government are to be carried into execution....The [Supreme Court’s] power of deciding in a last resort, all questions ‘arising under the constitution and laws’ of the United States...cannot be the assertion of a right to change that instrument.”

There is ample room in which Justices certainly may discuss all aspects of a subject that include challenges of the strictest construction but Marshall added: “There is a fair construction which gives to language the sense in which it is used, and interprets an instrument according to its true intention.” But, he insisted, “the intention of the instrument must prevail” and the instrument’s “provisions are neither to be restricted into insignificance nor extended to objects not comprehended in them nor contemplated by its framers.”

## Lincoln Review Commentaries — March-April 2006

### Page 2 – Commentary #8

This matter is the heart of the increasing national debate many of us have with respect to federal court jurists who often legislate or interpret the laws and presumed intentions of Congress to a degree that makes a mockery of our legislative system and may fly in the face of common sense and the public's understanding of laws their representatives have duly enacted.

Karl Spence, aided by the Fielding Press in Converse, Texas, is advocating approval of a Constitutional Amendment to be known as "The Fair Construction Amendment" so "the Judiciary of the United States shall not presume to exercise non-judicial power." This Amendment, if approved by a national referendum following its endorsement by the Congress, would reaffirm the fundamental limits spelled out in the Constitution by the country's "founding fathers" in 1789. And any jurist who violated such limits would, under its terms, be subject to impeachment.

The Fair Construction Amendment would reaffirm that "no one in the United States shall be either subject to or entitled to discrimination in education, employment, housing, or public accommodations on account of race." This would do away, once and for all, with such unconstitutional procedures as affirmative action and other discriminatory acts based on race, religion or gender, by federal and state governments.

The first and core provision of the Amendment stipulates that the Constitution may only be changed "by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people.... Its provisions are neither to be restricted into insignificance nor extended beyond the natural and obvious meaning contemplated by the plain understanding of the people at the time of its adoption." Finally, the Fair Construction Amendment would provide that the perpetrators of violent crimes may meet with swift and certain retribution and efforts by courts to protect such perpetrators' rights "shall not be perverted into permitting any mere technicality to avert or delay their punishment."

It is my view that just such an Amendment is long overdue. This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C.