

## Lincoln Review Commentaries – September-October 2005

### **PROGRAM #1**

Grieving Mother Sheehan's ego-celebrity touring in Crawford, Texas, and her Bush-bashing rhetoric, doesn't reflect the views of her family or the hero that was her brave son. Hi! This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C. I'll return in a moment with my commentary....

It was apparent back in early August that to salve the grief of one mother named Cindy Sheehan, whose son died a hero's death in Iraq while waging war for a better world, only a barrage of outrageous statements and a media mob circus would do.

Keep in mind this son was no wet-behind-the-ears teenager, dragged off by U.S. military recruiters to be cannon fodder in some trivial peace-keeping distraction. This son was Specialist Casey Sheehan who, after three years of attendance at a community college, signed on with the U.S. Army in 1999 and then, three years later in 2003, and five months after an American led coalition launched Operation Iraqi Freedom, he proudly re-enlisted.

Casey was more than well aware he would likely see live action that might have fatal or injurious consequences. But Casey chose the Army and chose to serve, despite the hazards of such duty, because he wanted to, just as thousands upon thousands of brave American men and women have done since 1776.

This young man gave his life for the worthiest of causes: to defend his country and the world community against unbridled terrorism and to end oppression of the Iraqi people so they might try to create a democracy and enjoy freedom in the heart of an Arab world that has seldom, if ever, tasted either democracy or freedom. His brave commitment was to a noble cause.

But in the name of grief stricken motherhood, Cindy Sheen has trashed her son's nobility of purpose with outlandish interview statements to a hungry news media and a coterie of extreme leftist activists. Just consider these choice quotes from Mother Cindy:

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The President of the United States, who was her son's Commander in Chief in Iraq, and who made the special effort during his travels in 2004 to meet and console the then truly grieving Mrs. Sheehan, is now deemed by her to be "that filth-spewer and warmonger." Furthermore, she alleges that "America has been killing people on this continent since it was started" plus "the killing has gone on unabated for over 200 years" and our Constitutional republic of, by and for the people is a "morally repugnant system" because "this country is not worth dying for."

It has since been reported that Mrs. Sheehan's family expressed immense distress and shame over the behavior of Casey's mother, that Cindy's husband has filed for divorce and, on August 18<sup>th</sup>, her mother had a stroke, possibly exacerbated by her daughter's unseemly rhetoric and the protest demonstrations near the President's vacation home in Crawford, Texas. Wrote satirical columnist Ann Coulter: "After your third profile on 'Entertainment Tonight' you're no longer a grieving mom; you're a C-list celebrity trolling for a book deal or a reality show."

The only member of Cindy Sheehan's family who cannot be embarrassed is Specialist First Class Casey Sheehan, her son, who gave his remarkable young life for all the things his mother now so stridently claims to hate. She deserves no further sympathy or recognition beyond that bestowed on any parent who loses a child in war. America's prayers should be in grateful memory of Casey's deeds, not his mother's grossly over-publicized "grief."

And perhaps, despite the nation's Katrina miseries and Katrina victims and all of the truly serious problems the nation her son died for, egocentric Cindy Sheehan will continue her charade of remorse and her scurrilous allegations against a President who shared her grief and comforted her when she admitted she needed it the most and when she admitted, as well, that he had been consoling.

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

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### **PROGRAM #2**

Government decision makers beware! Your emergency help was and is appreciated only as long as it was, and is, truly responsive to needs, otherwise unmet. But..... This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C. I'll return in a moment with my commentary....

With regard to Katrina or any other national or regional disaster, the federal government's help should be accepted only as long as it is clearly seen to be effective in addressing and overcoming the crisis at hand. Obviously, at the very least the government has an obligation to restore order if and when local authorities cannot or will not.

Beyond that, but only if requested, the federal establishment should be ready to assist the people affected so the private sector can proceed to expedite and complete the task of restoring order, renovating what is salvageable and rebuilding whatever is destroyed or deemed to be unwise to repair. Such assistance is especially important in rebuilding the infrastructure of roads and bridges that are clearly integral to the city or state's connections to the federal highway transportation system. But it is up to Louisiana and the city of New Orleans or any town or parish to take care of its own local facilities as much as possible.

Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath may truly have been the most destructive natural catastrophe in America's long history. For most of the Gulf Coast, the disaster was simply a matter of uncontrollable Nature overwhelming humans and their structures with irresistible waves of wind and water from the Gulf of Mexico.

From the barely impacted coastline of the Florida Panhandle to the shoreline of Alabama and the total devastation of the entire coastal region of Mississippi, the human element reacted with remarkable courage. State and local government personnel responded with amazing alacrity. The rebound of the human spirit was palpable.

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The Governors of those states rallied their forces brilliantly and seemingly without fanfare or political acrimony. Especially outstanding, according to all reports, was the leadership so far demonstrated by Governor Haley Barbour in the most wind- and surf-ravaged state of all: Mississippi. And there has been almost no rancor or racism silliness in the aftermath as there has been in New Orleans.

In parts of Alabama and all along the coast of Mississippi, fierce 150 mile winds and 70-foot-high waves brought annihilating surges of Gulf waves smashing and literally flattening several blocks, inland, of shorefront dwellings, businesses, trees and undergrowth, beaches and highways.

In the case of Louisiana and its City of New Orleans, the immense damage was mostly caused by water: a torrent of rain coupled with the violent surge of windblown waves from Lake Pontchartrain that breached the levees in two critical places and flooded 87 percent of the City streets and properties up to a full story high. The devastation trapped thousands in their homes, in attics, on their roofs or, if able to escape, forced them to desperately seek higher ground on the elevated ramps of the highway maze in and around the City.

But beyond the natural causes of horror and misery, in Louisiana and New Orleans, unlike the other Gulf states, Katrina's nightmare was made much worse by people. From the Governor's office in Baton Rouge to the Mayor's domain in New Orleans the elected leadership's response was abysmal, and the behavior of some of those who appeared as, or claimed to be, "victims" was criminally atrocious. Many of the bureaucrats, who supposedly were responsible at state and municipal levels, demonstrated an abject incapability after years of laissez faire political domination by one Party and a long record of corruption, top to bottom, in state and local government. They were, in many instances, poorly trained and sadly directed. Sio what else is new? This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C.

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### **PROGRAM #3**

While U. S. Senators fussed and fumed over Judge John Roberts who now will be Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, other federal judges made contradictory decisions. Hi! This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C. I'll return in a moment with my commentary....

Long overdue justice was served in the court of U.S. District Court Judge Lynn Hughes. She laid down a gauntlet long overdue in America. She ruled that a federal agency which conspired with environmentalists to conduct a ten-year series of lawsuits and harassment against a defendant, by using illicit and deceitful tactics and goes on to lose the case, must pay the defendant's legal bills which totaled \$72-million. This was good news which we'll discuss in a moment. The other decision provides such ridiculously bad news for all Americans, it requires little recognition beyond contempt. That was the decision of a California Judge to declare the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional because it makes reference to "God." We'll concentrate on Judge Hughes' finding.

At the Lincoln Institute we have always maintained that it is egregiously unfair for a victorious defendant to have to shoulder the legal costs incurred, especially against an agency of government that draws its resources for prosecution from the taxpayers of the country.

In the case in point, Houston entrepreneur and financier Charles Hurwitz whose conglomerate, Maxxam, included a failed Savings and Loan company, was charged by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), in 1995, with having dumped supportive funds, under duress from Hurwitz, into the S&L after it was obvious the savings institution would collapse in 1988.

FDIC was never able to disprove Hurwitz's contention that no such dumping took place. The federal agency, designed to protect the integrity of banking activities, then engaged in what Judge Hughes saw as "its betrayal of the public trust, its vindictive political assault on a private citizen."

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After FDIC dropped its initial claim against Hurwitz in 2002, it then illegally supplied funding for yet another regulatory agency – the Office of Thrift Supervision – to pursue the same charges against Hurwitz only this time, Hurwitz counter-sued, arguing that the government's aggressive behavior was a political vendetta that had nothing to do with the failed S&L.

He was able to demonstrate that the real objective of the attacks against Maxxam, initiated by the Clinton Administration, was to force Maxxam (if convicted of an infraction vis-à-vis the thrift) - to give up a 5,000-acre redwood forest in California owned and selectively logged by another Maxxam subsidiary, the Pacific Lumber Company, in order to placate a group of environmentalists.

Coincident with the period covered by the litigation, the Congress, in 2000, had conducted an investigation of the FDIC in which it was discovered that the agency's lawyers, from the outset of the Hurwitz lawsuit, had doubted its legitimacy or a likelihood of winning on merit.

This inquiry also disclosed that FDIC lied repeatedly when, in response to the Hurwitz counter-suit, the agency denied ever contacting environmentalists prior to the 1995 suit.

Judge Hughes, noting that the purpose of FDIC's assault on Hurwitz was to so cripple Maxxam with debt in defending him that the environmental community could pick up Maxxam's property.

This case not only demonstrates how wrong our legal system is in allowing virtually indiscriminate lawsuits that often force defendants into bankruptcy even when they win. That, then, is not justice but such cruel punishment that often defense attorneys counsel their clients to seek a settlement that actually suggests an innocent victim is guilty for not fighting to achieve vindication. This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C.

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### **PROGRAM #4**

The United States is awash, as never before, in opportunities to gamble.

From roulette wheels and state lotteries to the neighborhood card games

it's a national epidemic. Hi! This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review

from Washington, D.C. I'll return in a moment with my commentary....

Since it is the nature of humans to make wagers from the instant they bet their infant screams are the easiest way to get someone's attention, none are surprised to learn that indigenous native populations on this continent are known to have had their contests of chance and the first colonists brought some card and shell games with them to provide a little entertainment on the long sea voyage from Europe and to improve their fortunes (they hoped) after they got here.

Certainly, horse race betting, poker, black jack, craps and the seductive Irish Sweepstakes long ago supplied all the chances most gamblers could wish for. But then came the casinos of Mississippi riverboat cruise fame and ultimately Las Vegas, Atlantic City and around every corner of every city lurked the "numbers" game.

Then, in 1988, Congress enacted the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA), which provides a federal license to designated Indian tribes with reservations on which to build and operate casinos. These are often monopolistic when authorized in states that otherwise prohibit such gambling centers. Two of the world's largest casinos, each doing a billion dollar's worth of business, are Indian-owned in Connecticut where non-Indians may not operate gaming beyond bingo parlors with a charity tag.

Today, there are nearly 300 American Indian casinos, nearly all of them run and staffed by non-Indian gambling industry professionals, and there will soon be applications pending for licenses from up to 300 more. Indian casinos around the nation are now generating 20-billion dollars worth of revenue annually.

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There is a more critical downside to this picture which few are willing to discuss. They are the thousands of patrons who are losers. American gamblers now are reported to be losing up to \$100-billion a year. The man who compiled evidence of this is Indian researcher and columnist Tom Giago, a former editor and publisher of several tribal newspapers. He is appalled by the waste of lives, money and hopes, by Indians whose tribes run casinos.

He notes in a recent commentary for the *Native American Journalists Foundation, Inc.*, that *Newsweek* magazine reported over a year ago that there were “247 Indian-owned casinos, 84 riverboat or dockside casinos and there is some form of legalized gambling in 48 states. The gaming industry, including Vegas and Atlantic City, took in \$47-billion back in 1996 but by 2003 that amount reached \$72-billion and continues to grow. “All of that money is coming from somebody’s pocket and that pocket has to belong to the losers.”

What really disturbs Giago is the spreading addiction among Indians. He writes:

“During a 2001 study at the Harvard Medical School doctors monitored the brain waves of gaming subjects and determined that the same brain areas lighted up as those who used drugs and alcohol for pleasure. ‘This put gambling on the map with other neuro-biologic addictions,’ said Dr. Barry Kosofsky, a pediatric neurologist at Weill Cornell Center in New York City.

“Indian adults are spending their per capita payments, and their welfare and paychecks at the gaming tables. They are losing the money they should have used to buy school clothes for their children, to pay their rent or mortgage or to buy food to put on their tables. They are abandoning their children to babysitters or worse, leaving them at home alone, while they feed their gambling addiction at their reservation casinos.” Giago concludes: “Although the casinos are the goose that laid the golden egg to many heretofore poverty stricken tribes, their very success creates a new generation of gambling addicts. It’s a shame to see casinos grow at the expense of tribal members.” This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, DC

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### **PROGRAM #5**

One of the finest political strategists who ever husbanded a famous chief executive through the worst thickets of American presidential politics is fighting what may be his last battle. Hi! This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington D.C. I'll return in a moment with my commentary...

Credit Human Events political editor John Gizzi for keeping us posted on many matters not always addressed by today's major media moguls. The latest example: a splendid profile at the end of August regarding the man who helped so long and hard to bring Ronald Reagan to the electoral forefront. The man in question - Franklyn Curran Nofziger - who, in 1966, left a successful career as a star Washington -based political reporter with the powerful Copley Press newspaper empire, based in San Diego, to team up with Reagan as his press secretary in a campaign for Governor of California.

Why feature Nofziger right at this time? Because at age 81, Lyn, as he is nicknamed, is fighting bladder cancer and there are a lot of us, albeit at different ages, and times along the way, and for a variety of reasons, who joined what became the Reagan bandwagon that would eventually park for eight years at the White House. We who knew and appreciated Lyn Nofziger's great contributions to the Reagan success story are glad to pay deserved homage at this or any time.

Gizzi recalls Nofziger's later comments regarding his decision to become Reagan's press advisor and I quote: "It cost me a good, if not outstanding, reporting career, most of the rest of my hair, and hundreds of dollars for the purchase of antacids. The only reason it didn't cost me my wife, Bonnie, was because she is more patient, more stubborn and more forgiving...especially more forgiving than many other political wives." (end quote)

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Nofziger had served in World War Two so he was battle tested – almost an absolute must to survive the job of presidential press secretary. He was at Reagan's side in the Governor's office in Sacramento and through bids for the presidency in 1968, 1976 and, of course, the victory year of 1980. He also ran the candidate's political action committee from 1977 through 1980 and then on the White House staff.

In interviews with old friends, Nofziger prefers to reminisce rather than discuss current affairs or his physical condition. He insists: "The old days were indeed better." One thing he reminds visitors of is that he knew the late President's brother, J. Neil "Moon" Reagan, before he ever met "The Gipper." They met in 1964 when "Moon" Reagan was an advertising executive who had become a TV advisor to then Senator and Republican Presidential nominee Barry Goldwater. "Moon" persuaded Goldwater to let brother Ronald deliver what was to become the most talked about and admired speech in that otherwise dismal campaign. The speech was entitled "A Time for Choosing" and it attracted the biggest flood of political donations for the GOP ticket in the entire campaign. It also had the effect of launching Ronald Reagan's emergence as a future candidate for the highest office in the land.

Nofziger and "Moon" Reagan became good friends and in June of 1965, during a Republican meeting in Ohio, he met the future President and two months later joined "Moon" and Ronald for lunch in Los Angeles where he confirmed and would then write a lead story that Reagan was running for Governor of California in 1966. Once the campaign got serious, Nofziger's senior editors at Copley Press urged him to take a job as Reagan's press aide and, subsequent to victory, he was appointed the Governor's press spokesman. The bonding of Reagan's many talents with his spokesman's press and strategy credentials marked what would be a long and fruitful association for both men for the next 22 years from Governor's office to the White House.

What a story! This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C.

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### **PROGRAM #6**

Hats off! to the *Wall Street Journal's* editorialists for coming up with the simplest means of paying for the restoration of the Katrina-destroyed Gulf Coast. This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C. I'll return in a moment with my commentary....

President George W. Bush has proposed a massive federal spending program to rebuild and restore New Orleans and the coast of Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana along the Mexican Gulf. His plan is bold and, in large part, deemed to be necessary by most Americans because Hurricane Katrina caused the greatest natural disaster in U.S. history.

Many of us are concerned, however, that the costs of the President's proposals may ultimately exceed the \$200-billion dollar estimate so far advanced and creep closer to a trillion dollars before completion over the next decade and perhaps beyond.

Into this breach has stepped editorial page editor Paul Gigot and his band of enterprising editorial writers with a recommendation we think is an absolute MUST. In a September 14<sup>th</sup> editorial entitled "A 'Moronic' Proposal," the Journal picked up on an idea initiated by the people of Bozeman, Montana, who, in magnificent all-American and bi-partisan fashion responded to Katrina's devastating effect by petitioning their City Council to give back to the federal treasury a four million dollar appropriation pledge for the construction of a parking garage that was included in the recent mega-billion dollar federal highway building legislation. Bozeman folks would rather see the money used to help New Orleans or Mississippi recover. We can imagine that most Americans would feel much the same way.

That highway legislation, we all know, was pork-stuffed with expenditures for every Congressional office-holder's pet projects to satisfy home-folk constituencies.

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And since the measure has been signed into law, the nation's taxpayers, willingly or otherwise, in effect signed off on the spending spree the day the President applied his John Hancock to the roads' measure.

So, writes the Journal editorialist (and I quote): "Why not cancel all of the special-project pork in the highway bill and dedicate the \$25 billion in savings to emergency relief on the Gulf Coast? Is it asking too much for Richmond, Indiana, to give up three million dollars for its hiking trail, or Newark, New Jersey, to put a hold on its two million dollar bike path?

"And...couldn't Alaskans put a hold on the infamous \$454 million dollar earmark for the 'two bridges to nowhere' that will serve a town of 50 people? That same half a billion dollars could rebuild thousands of homes for suffering New Orleans evacuees. One obstacle to this idea apparently will be Don Young, the House Transportation Committee Chairman who captured the funds for Alaska in the first place. A spokesman in his office told the Anchorage Daily News that the pork-for-relief swap was 'moronic....'"

The Journal went on to point out that there are over 6,000 such parochial "pork" projects in this year's enacted and signed highway building extravagance – an average of 14 projects per the 435 U.S. Congressional Districts that could be set aside to help the Gulf Coast in this hour of its need. This might immensely help the federal government and American taxpayers pay for meeting that need. Frankly, we think the citizens of Bozeman, Montana, have a great idea that surely "puts their money where their mouth is." Who needs a parking garage when thousands of our fellow citizens have lost their homes and all of their lifetime possessions

Of course, a great many of us have little patience and even less respect for the pork spending that has become such a halter around the necks of American taxpayers over the years. It is enough that we have to spend so much for surface transportation. Let's make disaster relief take precedence instead of pork. This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C.

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### **PROGRAM #7**

A man I knew well and greatly admired and a man I respected but who was not among my coterie of close friends have both died recently. Hi! This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C. I'll return in a moment with my commentary....

A very good friend of mine here in the Washington area, and a fellow Kiwanian, Gene E. McCoy and John Harold Johnson, the Chicago publisher of books and such nationally renowned magazines as EBONY and JET, died in late summer this year. All who knew well, and associated with, Gene McCoy and his wife Mary Ann, now feel the emptiness that his passing has caused. Thousands of Americans who read and relied on what Harold Johnson's publications provided are likely never to have known him at all but were touched by his accomplishments and his ideas.

Gene McCoy was a West Virginian and "proud of it." He and I first met when he joined our Downtown D.C. Kiwanis Club in 1975, two years after I became a member. We hit it off quickly with teasing, humor and good fellowship.

Both of us became President of this great Club – I in 1983-84, Gene in 1990-91. Gene was a sponsor of my membership in the prestigious University Club in Washington, up near the Russian Embassy on 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Northwest. And my wife, Dolores also became a close friend of Mary Ann McCoy. We attended the McCoy's 40<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary celebration and Gene helped Dolores with her promotional and fund-raising campaign on behalf of her national professional and business black women's sorority. He even arranged for her to meet with a dinner group in Arlington, Virginia, to explain the importance of her sorority endeavor.

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The McCoys also financially supported a Foundation connected to Dolores' activities. Gene McCoy was a good friend, a good raconteur, a good advisor and good listener. What more can anyone ask?

As to Harold Johnson, who died of congestive heart failure in early August, let none forget that he was a brilliant pioneer among black businessmen who emerged after World War Two with confidence in their abilities and the future. Johnson was born poor in Arkansas but with a \$500 loan in 1946, he set in motion the process of building both a publishing firm and a cosmetic business to serve, primarily, the then largely un-served black community.

It proved to be a venture so successful that Johnson became one of the nation's foremost entrepreneurs and, in 1996, was presented the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Clinton. At the Rockefeller Memorial Chapel on the University of Chicago campus, where some 1,500 people attended a two and a half hour service following Johnson's funeral, President Clinton noted (and I quote):

“He never thought to lift himself up by knocking someone else down. He basically wanted the same success for everybody.”

Mayor Richard Daley praised Johnson as one who understood Chicago and the needs of its people better than anyone else and in tailoring his publications and cosmetics business around that knowledge was able to reach black Americans as well as others throughout the country. He was a truly great achiever who will be sorely missed.

Like all great innovators, he started by observing and soon realized, for example, that cosmetics most needed by black women were seldom if ever to be found in the mainstream marketplace or actually did not exist at all. Johnson filled the vacuum and did so with class.

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

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### **PROGRAM #8**

Thanks to close ties between Congress and labor unions, many American workers are kept unemployed or less able to advance in the job market. Hi! This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C. I'll return in a moment with my commentary....

As our nation prepares to spend seemingly unlimited billions on rebuilding and restoring New Orleans and the Gulf coast from South Louisiana to Florida's Panhandle, the contractors who are hired under federal auspices will be required to pay the top scale "prevailing wage" for every thing that is done. That prevailing wage is required under an arbitrary political concoction called the Davis-Bacon Act, adopted by Congress years ago to pacify labor unions.

As critical documentary commentator and columnist John Stossel recently noted: "Under Davis-Bacon, the government issues wage edicts that are different in every town, but largely based on whatever unions tell them was the wage that prevailed at any given moment in that community.

Relying on such union information immediately sidelines all of the workers in a given area who might be willing to work for a good deal less, from even being considered. This usually inflates the costs to the government while shutting out willing contractors whose laborers don't march in lockstep with unions.

Those contractors who operate under Davis-Bacon are not allowed to hire eager workers not in the union who might, though not always, be a shade less skilled and who seek employment that matches their talent.

Over the next few weeks of Congressional discussion about the President's plan to bring back the Gulf Coast and New Orleans, we expect a lot of words will flow over the proposition that in this national emergency, Davis-Bacon should be set aside.

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We can only hope it is but with America's trade union movement already in some disarray because of declining membership and with the Democratic Party stalwarts so dependent on unions for campaign financing and voter support, don't hold your breath in anticipation of a Davis-Bacon set-aside.

It would be rewarding for all of us if many of the presently unemployed workers in the Gulf Coast had a meaningful chance to participate in the rebuilding effort as well as a healthy opportunity to earn some desperately needed cash for themselves and their families.

If Davis-Bacon is removed from the equation for this emergency, the working men and women who need jobs in the ravaged areas will not only save us all, as taxpayers, some expense but can quickly learn some new skills from the fewer top scale union men the contractor is most apt to continue relying on.

This, of course, is just one of the troublesome concerns regarding the decision to undertake an all-out reclamation of New Orleans and the entire Gulf Coast. I have always felt particularly good about the fact that what made the United States such a superior nation is that people from every part of the world, from every ethnic, social, religious and political background, pulled together on this side of the Atlantic and Pacific to build their own country out of a wilderness.

We've had terrible disasters in the past when little, if any, government help was available and somehow the people hardest hit wasted no time responding by pulling together and doing what needed to be done to get things back to normal whether it was from fires in San Francisco or Chicago or Baltimore, tornadoes in Oklahoma or Missouri, earthquakes in California or forest fires in the Pacific Northwest and, yes, hurricanes along the Atlantic seaboard. Why can't the people of the Gulf Coast show they can do much of what needs to be done on their own before this relief task becomes a federal spending nightmare? This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C.

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### **PROGRAM #9**

This particular script was prepared September 18<sup>th</sup> – the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Sweden’s most famous actress and, for a few oldsters, America’s as well. This is Jay Parker with the Lincoln Review from Washington, D.C. I’ll return in a moment with my commentary....

Greta Lovisa Gustafsson was born in 1905 in Stockholm, the daughter of a working class family. With her two siblings, the family of five lived in a small apartment. Her father died when she was 14 and the family was destitute so she found a job as a teenage salesgirl selling hats in a department store named PUB. Greta Garbo made her screen debut in her store’s advertising film. She did so well that in 1922, she was accepted in the Swedish Royal Drama Theatre’s school of dramatic arts.

Her first commercial, non-advertising or promotional film appearance was the starring role in “The Story of Gosta Berling” which few in the U.S. ever saw except at classic film gatherings for actors and producers.

In honor of the actress, Sweden’s Film Institute was to devote the rest of September to screenings of Garbo’s 13 greatest motion pictures while the Swedish National Portrait Gallery features an exhibition at the Gripsholm Castle, west of Stockholm, entitled “The Divine, Greta Garbo 100.”

One of my colleagues in our work at the Lincoln Institute tells me that his parents and, especially his mother, a widow by 1934, probably saw not more than a dozen movies in their whole lifetime. But for them the only star that counted was Garbo.

Garbo was the supreme class act and the veritable “Princess of Privacy.” Her most famous line, which also was liberally applied both in screen appearances and to nosy Hollywood reporters, was, with heavy accent in her deepest alto: “I want to be alone.”

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Garbo's first American film was "Torrent," a silent film in 1924. But it was with the advent of sound and the rapidly improving technology of cameras and film editing that her greatest acting qualities emerged, full-force. Unquestionably her greatest film was her lead role in "Anna Karenina." A reviewer described Garbo as having such "sad, luminous eyes" in a face of classic structure and many of her admirers agreed that her slight, sardonic smiles together with eyes that seemed to reflect a deep analytical wisdom were totally captivating. Yet in "Ninotchka" she starred in a comedy role and in such masterpieces as "Anna Christie" and "Grand Hotel" her sophistication was well advanced beyond the usual fare of early Hollywood productions.

Greta Garbo revealed almost nothing about her personal life, gave no interviews, hated publicity sessions urged by her studios and producers and always indicated she was happiest when off the movie set and back in her own private world.

Some who knew her better than others were inclined to suggest that Garbo was in search of a meaning to her work in the movies and to life itself. In fact, one of her more memorable lines was that "life would be so wonderful if we knew what to do with it." Perhaps, having been snatched from the security and love of her family by finding it necessary to cut short her childhood when her father died, she may never have been able to comfortably make the transition into understanding adulthood where one learns what life is really about.

She was nominated for Best Actress Academy Award recognition four times but never won. However, late in life she was honored with a special award for her great movie career. At the end of World War Two, though only 37 and in the view of millions of fans, she retired, observing that the War had so changed the world her heart was no longer in the theater. She remained in New York, though she traveled to Europe frequently with her jet-set friends. At age 84 in 1990, she died and her body was returned to her native Sweden for burial. She was truly a great lady.

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