

Bay Area Skeptics Information Sheet
Vol. 9, No. 9
Editor: Yves Barbero

DON'T CALL ME BROTHER

by Austin Miles

[Austin Miles was one of the first to expose Jim Bakker's PTL Club con game. The excesses were dizzying. A sincerely religious man, Miles had to literally force his eyes open. But there were early indications of the problems to come. Below is an excerpt from "Don't Call Me Brother" (Prometheus, 1989, \$19.95), the book that recounts his amazing encounters with America's spiritual con men (and women).]

"The greatest of all time." he [Pastor Bedzyk] continued, "was William Branham. He had a word of knowledge so precise that there was no way it could have been anything but of God. And this was proved! Even the most hardened skeptics would fall down on their knees in from of him."

I was already vaguely aware of the Reverend William Branham. Many "miracles" had been attributed to his ministry, and his "words of knowledge" seemed so uncanny that they made Oral Roberts envious. Reverend Roberts has once complained to a close friend, "I can't understand why God hasn't given me the ability to read minds like William Branham!"

"You said that Reverend Branham had a `precise' word of knowledge, and that it was `proved.' How did he work?"

"Well," Pastor Bedzyk answered, excitement building in his voice, "as you know, people sometimes think the evangelist can call out anything and someone will respond to it. To prove that this was not just guesswork and that it really was from God, Bill Branham had everyone write down on a piece of paper any illness or problem that they wanted God to help them with. This way, it was all on record and could not be altered. They then sealed the piece of paper in an envelope.

When they all came up in the prayer line, Bill Branham walked down the line taking all the envelopes, and then stacked them up on the pulpit. As each person came forward, Brother Branham held that envelope in the air. Then -- he proceeded to tell that person everything that they needed and wanted from God. He would open the envelope and absolutely everything. word for word, that he had said was right there written down! Miraculous healings took place. 1 Cancers just fell off people! People got `the shakes.' William Branham was probably the most anointed -- "

I did not hear the last part of what Pastor Bedzyk was saying. Suddenly, I felt sick to my stomach. "Pastor Bedzyk -- would you mind taking me back to my room? I don't feel well."

"Sure. Sure, we'll go right away."

As we got back in the car, Pastor Bedzyk kept talking: "Brother Branham put such a fear of God in people that one time a couple of men came up for prayer, both claiming to have several serious diseases. They were trying to put one over on Brother Branham. He put his hands on their heads, started to pray, then with great anger yelled, 'You don't have any of these diseases! You were trying to fool a prophet of God! Do you know what's going to happen to you? I'm going to tell God to put on you every disease you claimed to have -- right now! And you will be eaten alive by every loathsome disease you lied about!'"

Pastor Bedzyk began to chuckle. "Those rascals fell to their knees, grabbed Brother Barnham's feet, and kissed his shoes, begging and pleading with him not to put those diseases on them. It sure taught them a lesson they'd never forget, and this was in front of several thousand people. Brother Miles -- you do look sick. I'll get you back as quickly as possible."

The first thing I did when we got back was to be sick in the bathroom. Then I lay down on the bed and stared at the ceiling. My mind drifted back to the time when I was twelve years old, in Salinas, California. Like many boys, I was very interested in magic and had managed to accumulate several tricks. I had bought some props with paper route money, and made others from instructions in library books.

During my stay in Salinas, the Foley and Burke Carnival came to town. When they were setting up, I noticed a banner announcing "Senor Lopez -- The Magician from Mexico." I introduced myself to Senor Lopez and agreed to be his assistant for the week in exchange for magic lessons.

One afternoon he said, "Today I will teach you the envelope trick." This was a 'mind reading' trick that had fascinated me more than all the others. People in the audience would write questions on a piece of paper along with their name and address, and seal the questions in an envelope. During the show, the envelopes would be passed up the stage, and Senor Lopez would begin to "read the minds" of his audience.

He would take the first envelope with a flourish, tap it against his head, and say, "Where is Mary Johnson?"

Someone in the audience would respond, "Here I am."

"Your question is -- 'I lost a valuable diamond-studded earring last Tuesday. It has great sentimental value. Will I find it?'"

Senor Lopez would then begin to tear the envelope open. "Let's check what you wrote. Yes -- here is it -- `I lost a valuable diamond-studded earring last Tuesday. It has great sentimental value. Will I find it?'"

Everyone was amazed how Senor Lopez could have known what was written on the slip sealed in the envelope. Then he would continue, "Look in your closet. You have a pair of red shoes there. The earring dropped off while you were in the closet and landed inside the left shoe."

Mary Johnson would now be very animated. "I do have a pair of red shoes in the closet. This couldn't have been a trick! You really can read minds!"

Enthusiastic applause would burst forth. Senor Lopez would then take the next envelope, accurately describe everything written on the enclosed slip before he unsealed the envelope, and give advice for solving the problem.

"This is one of my favorite tricks," Senor Lopez said to me as he began instructing me in the secret. "The first person whose mind you read is a plant -- in this case, Mary Johnson. You do the earring story, or any other one you make up, first. When you open the envelope, you really open the envelope of the next person whose mind you're going to `read.' While pretending to read the information written by Mary Johnson, you're really reading the information for your next subject. You can even get away with putting the piece of paper down on your table and reading from it while you hold the next unopened envelope to your head. You are always one envelope ahead. This is the most effective of all the mind reading tricks."

The renowned Reverend William Branham, faith healer and prophet of God, had been using parlor tricks! He was deliberately staging his supposed messages from God in order to manipulate vulnerable people. Nobody had ever guessed the truth.

When William Branham died in a winter flood that swept through Louisville, Kentucky, his followers would not bury him. They were convinced that God would raise him from the dead on Easter Sunday morning -- four months hence. Easter Sunday came and went. Brother Branham stayed dead. Finally, they buried him.

[Used with the kind permission of Austin Miles.]

"It is error alone that needs the support of government.
Truth can stand by itself."

-- Thomas Jefferson (Notes on Virginia)

MILES ON CABLE

When Austin Miles spoke at the Bay Area Skeptics' June meeting, a video tape was of this splendid talk made by Dan Dugan. The tape was turned over to Paul Bernadino of the Public Access Cable Channel 25 of the San Francisco cable company.

The talk will be broadcast in its entirety on September 8, Channel 25, at 5:00 pm.

If you missed this talk, and you have San Francisco cable, don't miss this opportunity to view the talk. Be sure to tell your friends.

"The reasonable man adapts himself to the world: the unreasonable man persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore, all progress depends on the unreasonable man."

-- George Bernard Shaw

AN INNOCENT IN WONDERLAND

by Diogenes Arouet

[We've had some brilliant theorists talk about the various subtleties involved in the oxymoronically-termed Creation Science. We've had excellent political analysts dissect the subject to microscopic levels. Educators have had their say and then some. Now comes a man of exceptional creativity. He actually went down to the Institute for Creation Research and had a look-see. Yes, "BASIS" does favor on-site reports. -- The Editor]

Last year, out of sheer curiosity, I visited the ICR "campus" in Santee, California.

About 20 miles northeast of San Diego, as a non-evolutionary crow would fly if there were such, is the town of Santee, California. There, along the commercial strip of a freeway frontage-road, hard by auto parts dealers, a drive-in movie, and various other enterprises, stands that bastion of fundamentalist thought (sic): The Institute for Creation Research.

The ICR "campus," (after all, it does claim to be a graduate school) shares a two-story building with a combination copy center/office supplies store. But this is not just another of the store-front diploma mills, which appear to prosper in California. No, the ICR's classrooms and laboratories are BEHIND and BELOW the office supplies store. No PhDs by mail here!

I made my way across a parking lot and noted a bumper sticker (a master's thesis?): CREATION SCIENCE. Yes, this was the place. One wonders idly, do they have a football team? Do they play Oral Roberts University? Or Jerry Falwell's Liberty U? But no -- sports

are played by undergraduates, and this is a GRADUATE school! Be SERIOUS.

In the lobby I was confronted by racks of religious tracts and shelves of books and tapes of creationist dogma which were for sale. A receptionist greeted me pleasantly and asked if she could be of help. I asked to see a catalog, and was told that I could see one but couldn't take it with me. This because "the catalog is in revision." (This was late March 1989.)

A quick scan of the brief catalog showed courses in astrophysics, geology, science education, and the like. The titles (at least) were worthy of Cal Tech or Berkeley. The course descriptions however, certainly would not be found at Cal Tech, Berkeley, or even a Marx Brothers film. (Remember Groucho was President of Darwin U. in one film!) Bizarre outlines told how "The Great Flood" is PROVED, of the case against that old devil EVOLUTION, and all the rest (my italics). The faculty list showed several persons trained in engineering, a few in science, and a few in theology.

Having checked the catalog, I asked the receptionist if I might visit the classroom and laboratory area. After all, when one visits a research institute, one wants to see the center of activity. The receptionist flashed a Nancy Reagan/cheerleader's smile and explained, "You can't do that because they're under renovation." Further, "The Institute is installing a new carbon-14 dating laboratory. In response to my question of what do they DO in a carbon-14 lab she allowed as how she really didn't know, but she knew it was important, and "You can ask one of the professors."

(The ICR has been very critical of carbon-14 dating methods, claiming that the isotope decay rates CHANGE IN TIME, thus "supporting" the ICR notion that the Earth is less than 6,000 years old! By the way, ICR also holds that the speed of light has changed! This "explains" why distant galaxies are only a few thousand light years away instead of "millions and millions!!!") Fine, I said, let me do that. "You can't because none of the professors are around." How about a student then? Well, they too were "not around," leading me to conclude that faculty and students this day were as rare as busts of Darwin in a bible college.

But this "Catch-22" dialogue was not entirely in vain. No, there was HOPE! Though thwarted in my desires to take home a catalog, visit a lab, and talk to a professor or student, all was not lost! I was welcome to browse through the lobby materials, buy some tapes and reading matter, and visit the MUSEUM. The museum! My hostess escorted me past offices filled with wholesome-looking workers. She paused at the museum door, flashed another Nancy grin, and unlocked it (one protects what one values). I was cautioned to be careful because, "It's dark in there." Her warning had some merit, although the interior was beyond the illumination furnished by mere lamp bulbs. In this "museum" The Dark Ages were rampant!

This archive of the ICR, perhaps the equivalent in floor area of

two living rooms, had few artifacts on display (WHAT could they show?). There were posters, lists of names, biblical quotations, and photographs -- lots of photographs. There were photos of expeditions in search of Noah's Ark, and of fossil digs and other activities designed to demonstrate conclusively the errors of evolution. One knew these were serious scientists in the photos because they were dressed in safari clothes and pith helmets.

These exhibits inform one that the universe is no older than 6,000 years, that humans and dinosaurs co-existed, and that astronomers now "know" that galaxies are only a few thousand years old. Here one learns that the Grand Canyon's vivid exhibits of eons of geological history are not to be believed! There were many other examples, but these will suffice to capture the crackpot tone of the place. I scanned the Comments column in the Museum Guest Book, among those heaping praise found this terse and apt notation from a New York visitor: "Ludicrous and loathsome!"

I had more than my fill of ICR by now. On the other hand, if I could find a professor, I might be able to pick up a graduate degree. After all, I had most of the afternoon open.

["Diogenes Arouet" is the pen-name of a university instructor and electronics engineering consultant in the Bay Area.]

MINISTER PREACHES "SCIENTIFIC" CREATIONISM IN CALIFORNIA PUBLIC SCHOOL! by Eugenie C. Scott, PhD

A fundamentalist minister showed and discussed the creationist film, "Origins, Two Models" to a Weed, California public elementary school's seventh and eighth grade science classes in late March. Weed is located in the northern part of the state, near Mount Shasta.

A handout sheet accompanied the presentation, outlining the rationale for teaching creationism in the science classes, and various "evidences" in support of creationism. It also claimed that many scientists now consider the creation account a scientific theory.

A new, non-tenured science teacher, in his first year at the school, was informed by the principal that the minister's visit was going to take place, "was traditional," and had been taking place for some fifteen years (the minister is in fact, the principal's pastor.) The teacher protested the activity, but it took place nonetheless.

Reportedly, the eighth grade students questioned the minister closely, and many times he was forced to fall back to "explain" a point by saying "because the Bible says so." A Catholic student questioned whether she could believe God created (but did it

through evolution) and still be a Christian. She was told "No." The Ministerial Alliance has requested formalizing the visit in the future, whereas NCSE [National Center for Science Education - Ed.] members Ken Goehring and Michael Roesch have requested that the activity cease. The Board of Education has requested an opinion from the county attorney and the Department of Education on the teaching of creationism in the school. Thus far, there is no specific law or regulation prohibiting the teaching of creationism in California public schools.

However, the California Science Framework, specifically states that only science may be taught in science classes, and that "scientific" creationism is not scientific. Although not prohibited, the teaching of "scientific" creationism is unprofessional, and because it is a sectarian religious position, its advocacy contravenes the First Amendment clause of the Constitution.

In May, the Institute for Creation Research held a "Back to Genesis" conference in Weed. Ken Goehring, physical anthropologist at the College of the Siskiyous, presented a public lecture on human evolution a week later.

DR. SCOTT is executive director of the National Center for Science Education and an advisor to Bay Area Skeptics. The article is reprinted from BACC Science 3(2), Box 59072, San Jose, California. Subscriptions are \$5 a year. DR. SCOTT will lead the tour of the LIFE THROUGH TIME exhibit at the California Academy of Sciences September 22nd. Details are printed elsewhere in this issue.

"Our modern society is engaged in polishing and decorating the cage in which man is kept imprisoned."

-- Swami Nirmalananda, "Enlightened Anarchism"

EXCERPTS FROM WEED CREATION-SCIENCE HANDOUT

"We understand that evolutionary dogma is properly identified as a religious belief system...and thus should also submit to the First Amendment provisions."

"If you are the produce of mechanistic chance, then life loses [sic] much of its meaning."

"A significant number of qualified scientists are now finding that a creation account of origins fits better than does evolution."

"Conclusion: If the worldwide flood really occurred, it would be the primary explanation for most geological phenomena."

[Source: "BACC Science" 3(2)]

"The first duty of a revolutionary is to get away with it."

-- Abbie Hoffman

CHRISTIAN GODMEN FROM THE WEST

by A.K. Savani, Nagpur, India

(Courtesy "INDIAN SKEPTIC", January 1990)

In February, 1989, Nagpur was privileged to have miracle workers descend on the city on behalf of a Christian organization called "Global Network." A global con, in fact, where disease was to be cured by prayer. The wonder workers were Rev. Mike Huggins, Rev. Roger Jude and Sister Judy Such of the USA, along with Rev. Martin Bullman of Switzerland. These were ably assisted by Rev. Satish Rathore and 30 other experts. The venue of this miracle melee was Kasturchand Park. It was to extend from February 15th to 19th, but, thanks to the determined efforts of the Andha Shraddha Nirmulan Samithi, it fizzled out in a somewhat unspectacular way.

Large ads in local dailies, posters, banners and sign-boards announced the event. The promoters claimed all physical disabilities, skin diseases, cataract and blindness - anything that had defied medical remedy - could be cured instantly by prayer. Even persons attending the meetings were assured of better health - probably with residual blessings rubbing off on them too.

SKEPTICS OBJECT, DEMONSTRATE AND GET ARRESTED

When the skeptics (ANS) noted this false propaganda, the secretary, Mr. Harish Deshmukh, submitted a written complaint to the Sadar Police Station. He pointed out that instant cure by prayer was not possible, and such publicity merely helps spread blind belief and superstition. It must therefore be stopped at once.

The police did nothing. So a procession was organized against the godmen. Marching with the volunteers were physically handicapped people, the blind and the deaf, and even some dwarfs. They carried banners appealing for a cure for their disabilities by prayer. The committee offered the godmen Rs. 3,00,000 in prize money to demonstrate their miracles. Shouting slogans, they converged on Kasturchand Park and the police promptly arrested all 63 of them.

POLICE ARREST GODMEN

However, a similar march and demonstration was staged the next day. This time the police visited the venue where prayer meetings were in progress. They saw a healer touch a blind man's eyes and assure him he could see, when he couldn't. A lame man's leg was touched and he was told he could walk. Convinced this was all a con, the

police arrested the Christian faith-healers and the organizers.

GODMEN FACE MAGISTRATE

Cases were registered against them under the drugs and Magical remedies objectionable Advertisement Act, 1954, and violation of Medical Practitioners Act, 1961 (Maharashtra). Thereafter touching of the bodies of the sick, and the laying on of hands while praying was stopped. Earlier, when similar claims by a Mr. Hotsna, Rev. McLean and Rev. Peter were challenged, they had fled from the scene.

The protest demonstrators were led by Mr. Umesh Chaube, Mr. Harish Deshmukh, Mr. Ashok Chate, Mr. Dnyanesh Mawale, Nitin Choudhary, Yamini Chaudhary, Rekha Dendige, Vijay Metkar and other activists of the Andha Shraddha Nirmulan Samithi.

"Every form of mysticism is reactionary, and the reactionary man is mystical."
-- Wilhelm Reich

STEERING COMMITTEE NAMED

The Steering Committee to help in the local organization of the 1991 CSICOP Conference to be held in the Berkeley area has been, for the most part, named. In alphabetical order, they are:

- Yves Barbero (Chair), San Francisco
- Ken Goehring, Weed
- Larry Loebig, Oakland
- Rick Moen, San Francisco
- Gil Shapiro (Deputy Chair), Moraga
- Norm Sperling, Oakland
- Bob Steiner, El Cerrito

In addition, individuals from other areas of California will be invited to join the committee to coordinate publicity in their area and one member of Berkeley Skeptics will be invited to coordinate student activities on campus.

BAY AREA SKEPTICS, as host organization, has instructed the chair of the committee to make any future appointments. If you feel you have something to contribute to make this a successful conference, please contact him at 415-285-4358. Membership on the committee will be based entirely on merit without regard to group affiliation.

A NOTE FROM THE NEW EDITOR...

I've been hanging around Bay Area Skeptics for a number of years

now. At first, I folded, stapled and mailed this newsletter. Later, I graduated to being meeting coordinator and with the help of a lot of fine people, managed to look pretty good in that job. After several years of excellent work by Kent Harker, I've taken over as editor of "BASIS".

Don't expect any false modesty from me. I think I'm pretty qualified. I spent a year and a half as a reporter for the "Bangor Daily News" in Maine. I've had a novel published by Doubleday ("The CTZ Paradigm," 1975) and have had numerous articles published here and there. Some of you may have even seen some of my stuff in these pages. I also helped edit the "Hard Hat News" for the labor movement, a newsletter which borrowed its technical format from "BASIS".

For this newsletter to continue succeeding, it will require many hours of my time and the time of our friends and supporters. I invite articles of facts and opinions, letters, both friendly and critical (they can be both), and suggestions. I hope to be professional in my use of material. This means that I will edit materials as suits the needs of the publication. You may send editorial matter directly to me. Editorial matter sent to "BASIS" remains yours after publication although we have a policy of allowing newsletters from like-minded group to reprint articles.

Yves Barbero
1073 Dolores Street
San Francisco, CA 94110
415-285-4358

The primary focus of BAY AREA SKEPTICS is the promotion of science education, consumer protection against psychic fraud, exposing various confidence schemes related to medical and spiritual situations, the promotion of critical thinking and the investigation of the paranormal. The goal of "BASIS" is to reflect this focus, whether the editorial material be serious, humorous (nothing requires us to be somber) or satirical.

Skepticism is not an absolute or ideology. It is a methodology, that is, a way of looking at things. It is not really an ethical system either. There are plenty of scoundrels in the movement. It assumes that the universe is neutral in the affairs of individuals and nations. Skepticism can never answer questions of spirituality or purpose. So we leave those questions to groups better suited to those ends.

Its one focus is the discovery of facts, a thing that is unconcerned about virtue or villainy. This doesn't mean that skeptics do not have ethics. Most of us are involved in an ethical organization or one sort or another, whether this be humanist, political, religious or whatever. Skepticism is a tool. Motivation must come from other sources. As human beings, naturally, we do not normally make such distinctions. We do it only on reflection so as to understand our intellect better. The distinction, however,

should help us understand why such diverse elements as libertarians, atheists, religious, labor activists, communists, mainstream political types, cops, computer experts etc. gather under the skeptics' banner.

By inserting ourselves into the mainstream and questioning (sometimes loudly and in the public media) psychics, faith healers and the like, we draw attention to ourselves and help educate the public. We have, in this process, reminded academics to come down (sometimes grudgingly) from their ivory towers and join in the fray and have, I'd like to think, helped in linking the scientific community to the public.

We ain't perfect! A lot more needs to be done to reach out to the community at large. Considering the voluntary nature of our organization, we've done a good deal. But it's not enough. I hope I can contribute to the growth of the organization by putting out a sharp newsletter. I expect the reader to let me know when I'm off base. I'd like to be tipped off to abuses by individuals or organizations preying on the public. I will work best if I get feedback.

Lastly, if you have a need to understand where I come from, I work under the following principles.

=> It's possible for the bad guys to win. They're as smart as the good guys.

=> Extraordinary claims require extraordinary proofs.

=> No one has all the answers.

=> Explanations which attribute all things to a single cause are wrong.

=> The cosmos are indifferent but tend to favor the prepared.

I do not put these in a philosophically eloquent form but I've found them to be good rules of thumb.

"How can you call yourself an expert on the occult when occult means hidden or secret?"

-- Anton Szandor LaVey

THANK YOU, KENT HARKER

by Bob Steiner

Thank you, Kent Harker, Editor Emeritus, from me, from all people associated with Bay Area Skeptics, from the readers, from the community at large, and from the many around planet Earth who have

been touched by the far-reaching ripples of the wisdom that trickled from your computer over the past years.

Your writing and your service to Bay Area Skeptics have been an inspiration to many. You are an excellent writer, an analytical thinker, and are extremely knowledgeable about not just skepticism, but about life in general. The icing on the cake is that you are professionally expert at the computer.

We appreciate your well-considered editorials, your processing the considerable data submitted to you, your organizational skills, your participation in the activities of Bay Area Skeptics, . . . the list goes on.

We were indeed fortunate to have had Kent Harker as our eminently qualified Editor over the past few years.

THANK YOU, KENT!

WITHOUT MISSING A BEAT

Whether it be caused by serendipity or dedication, one has the distinct impression that the editorship of "BASIS" has a charmed existence.

After I struggled with the first several issues, I was able to cajole Mike McCarthy into assuming the editorship of "BASIS". If you were to make a list of ideal qualifications for the Editor of BASIS, you would find that Mike qualifies on every count.

After Mike's excellent service as Editor, some of us were worried about the future when Mike decided to move on. He would be a tough act to follow.

Mike located Ray Spangenburg and Diane Moser to assume the position. Whew! We did it! Ray and Diane were excellent. They, too, met every qualification on the hypothetical wish-list. They too came through with flying colors.

When Ray and Diane (now Kit) were ready to move on, there was no panic necessary. Kent was ready and able to pick up the ball and keep going. In case you noticed, the word willing was missing from the previous sentence. Not to worry. If all it took was to convince Kent to take a non-paying job that he had already told three different people he would not take, I considered myself prepared to tackle that task.

As you well know from reading "BASIS" over the past three years, we all won when Kent took over the position. He too meets every qualification on the wish-list.

Now that Kent has decided to move one, Yves Barbero is here to pick

up the reins. Yves had been a dedicated activist for Bay Area Skeptics for many years. He is an excellent writer and, happily, is a computer whiz, as have been all the other Editors of "BASIS". Yes, he satisfies all of the wish-list qualifications.

Much luck and success to you, Yves, as you embark on this new venture.

And to everybody else, please cooperate with Yves. Submit articles, letters, commentary, news reports, and moral support. Yves, as does every editor, wants them all.

Stick around and watch, Kent. You will find that the building you have helped to erect will continue to grow and prosper and educate.

Onward!

"Don't look back. Something might be gaining on you."
-- Satchell Paige

...A SMALL GEM

"The Heretic's Handbook of Quotations". Edited by Charles Bufe. 203 pages. See Sharp Press, P.O. Box 6118, San Francisco, CA 94101. (\$11.95 plus 1.50 P/H) Don't forget the sales tax.

"He is a true fugitive who flies from reason."
-- Marcus Aurelius

Someone has finally done it. Charles Bufe has compiled a book of quotations for US! Most books of quotations are lofty, inspirational or intended to make us solid citizens. To find something useful, you have to put on deep boots and wade through pious cliches. Bufe has rejected this guideline and assembled a book which serves the merely intelligent, the ordinary social critic, the curious skeptic.

You will find a number of quotations throughout this month's issue. They are all from Bufe's handbook.

Bufe covers scientific thinking, religion (or its lack), politics, women's issues, labor, patriotism, capitalism, revolution, freedom, law and a wide variety of other concerns. The book is not for the faint of heart or those who have all the answers. In fact, Bufe shows contrast by devoting a good portion to the opposition.

"Give to every human being every right that you claim for yourself."
-- Robert Ingersoll

"Obedience to the Law is Freedom"

-- Sign over entrance to the Fort Dix [N.J.] stockade

To be sure, the handbook favors the activist over the conservative.
But it doesn't spare totalitarians of any stripe.

"The National Socialist Party will prevent in the future, by force if necessary, all meetings and lectures which are likely to exercise a depressing influence..."

-- Adolf Hitler (Speech in Munich, January 4, 1921)

"...deprive the reactionaries of the right to speak."

-- Mao Tse Tung ("On the People's Democratic Dictatorship")

"Books of apostates, heretics, schismatics, and all other writers defending heresy or schism or in any way attacking the foundations of religion, are altogether prohibited."

-- Pope Leo XIII ("General Decrees Concerning the Prohibition and Censorship of Books", January 25, 1897)

His capsule bibliography at the end of the book not only reflects on those quoted in an informative manner but is a delight to read.

AL CAPONE - American businessman and gun fancier.

The bibliography is full of little known facts about individuals who have fallen through the cracks of history.

GEORGE WASHINGTON - 1732-1799, first U.S. president.

The best thing about the book is that it's a great deal of fun.

--Yves Barbero

THE SKEPTIC'S ELECTRONIC BULLETIN BOARD

=> 2400 Baud, 415-648-8944

=> 24 hours, 7 days a week

=> Rick Moen, Sysop

LIFE THROUGH TIME

If the parking problems are any indication, the California Academy of Sciences LIFE THROUGH TIME exhibit is one of the more successful in recent memory.

Years in the planning and building, this permanent exhibit uses the most advanced visual and computer technology around and mixes it seamlessly with live specimens and models to explain evolution.

Dr. Eugenie C. Scott of the National Center for Science Education, which is on the forefront of the battle to prevent the corruption

BAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair: Larry Loebig
Vice Chair: Yves Barbero
Secretary: Rick Moen
Treasurer: Kent Harker
Shawn Carlson
Andrew Fraknoi
Mark Hodes
Lawrence Jerome
John Lattanzio
Eugenie Scott
Norman Sperling

"BASIS" STAFF:

Yves Barbero, editor; Sharon Crawford, assoc. editor;
Wilma Russell, distribution; Rick Moen, circulation;
Kate Talbot, meeting coordinator; John Taube, media watch.

BAS ADVISORS

William J. Bennetta, Scientific Consultant
Dean Edell, M.D., ABC Medical Reporter
Donald Goldsmith, Ph.D., Astronomer and Attorney
Earl Hautala, Research Chemist
Alexander Jason, Investigative Consultant
Thomas H. Jukes, Ph.D., U. C. Berkeley
John E. McCosker, Ph.D., Director, Steinhart Aquarium
Diane Moser, Science writer
Richard J. Ofshe, Ph.D., U. C. Berkeley
Bernard Oliver, Ph.D., NASA Ames Research Center
Kevin Padian, Ph.D., U. C. Berkeley
James Randi, Magician, Author, Lecturer
Francis Rigney, M.D., Pacific Presbyterian Med. Center
Wallace I. Sampson, M.D., Stanford University
Eugenie C. Scott, Ph.D., Anthropologist
Robert Sheaffer, Technical Writer, UFO expert
Robert A. Steiner, CPA, Magician, Lecturer, Writer
Ray Spangenburg, Science writer
Jill C. Tarter, Ph.D., U. C. Berkeley

Opinions expressed in "BASIS" are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of BAS, its board or its advisors.

The above are selected articles from the September 1990 issue of "BASIS", the monthly publication of Bay Area Skeptics. You can

obtain a free sample copy by sending your name and address to BAY AREA SKEPTICS, 4030 Moraga, San Francisco, CA 94122-3928 or by leaving a message on "The Skeptic's Board" BBS (415-648-8944) or on the 415-LA-TRUTH (voice) hotline.

Copyright (C) 1990 BAY AREA SKEPTICS. Reprints must credit "BASIS, newsletter of the Bay Area Skeptics, 4030 Moraga, San Francisco, CA 94122-3928."

-END-