

from other pens...

## Who thought up Tax Freedom Day?

What a bunch of baloney they are tossing at us again. They, the government — federal on down the line.

April 24 — and we bet you felt the impact immediately — was Tax Freedom Day, the day, supposedly, we get to keep more of what we earn because we are now working for ourselves.

We should be celebrating — no more taxes! Whoopee!!

Now back to reality.

It might sound OK, but it's just another nutty thing coming from the Nutty Hill in Washington. It's their way of trying to convince us that there is light at the end of the tax tunnel. But when you consider it has taken nearly four months to clear out the tax burden for the year, and you listen to the three presidential candidates tell us what they are going to do for us (for or to us?) if elected, Tax Freedom Day will probably be 'celebrated' in May next year.

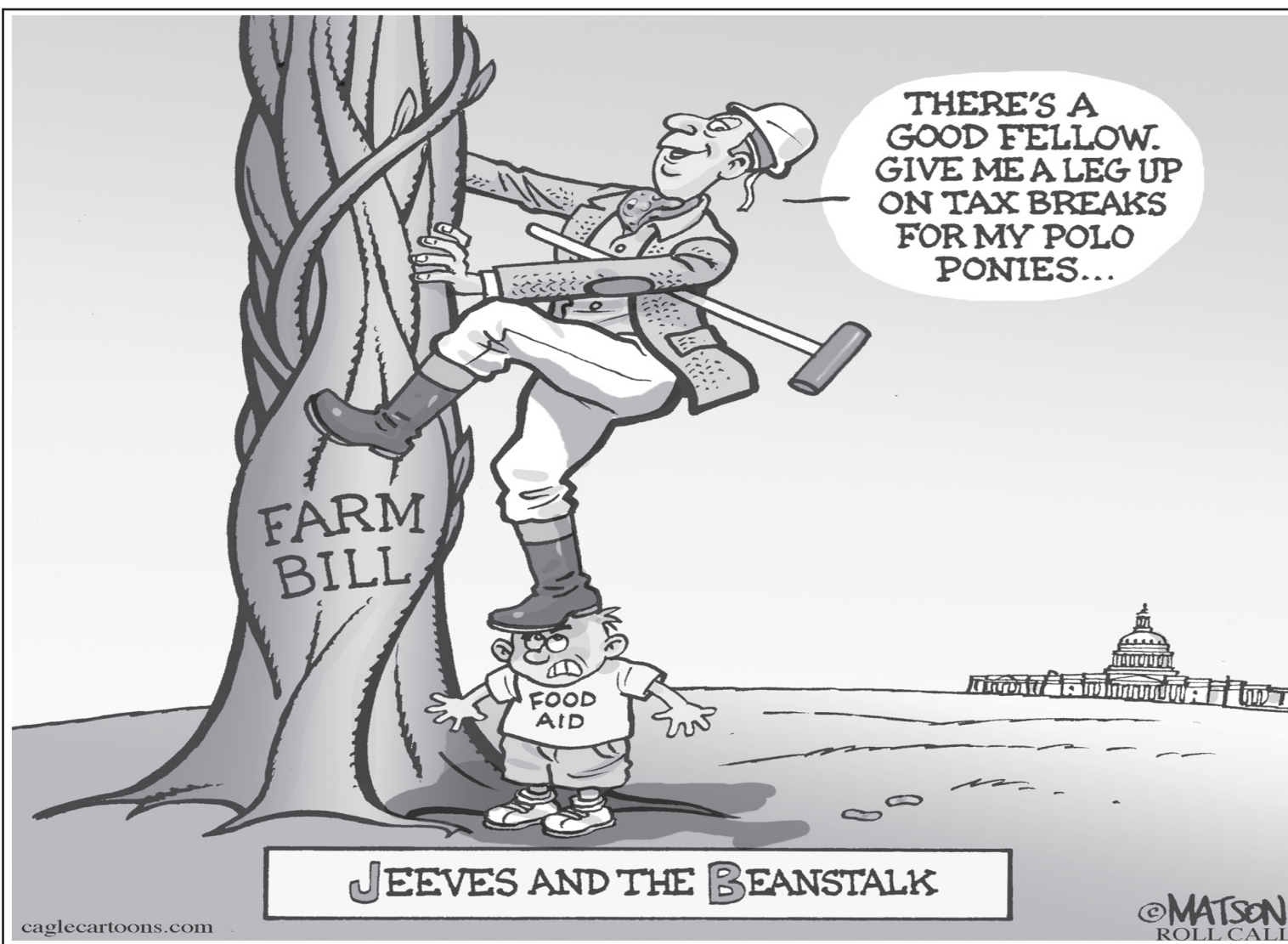
Tax Freedom Day — we often wonder who came up with that title — simply means we will continue paying the tax bill each day of the remaining days in 2008.

But each year, it seems those who represent us can hardly wait to get the word out — Tax Freedom Day! We are surprised that special day has not been declared a federal holiday so we can all have a free day from work and hold one gigantic nationwide celebration.

Next time you buy something and the clerk totals up the bill and applies the sale tax, just tell him or her that you've already paid up.

Yea, that'll fly like a kite with a tax bill attached.

— Tom Dreiling, *The Norton Telegam*



## where to write

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## American as tag and dodgeball

I never thought I'd beat Mike Landy at dodgeball.

Maybe I better explain.

A school in McLean, Va., reports *The Washington Post*, has banned tag. It's a national trend, you see. Dodgeball, tug-of-war and touch football are no longer permitted at many public schools across America.

Thank goodness I was a kid in the early 70s.

Every day during recess, we were unleashed to the parking lot. We played kickball, touch football and keep-away.

In keep-away, one kid carried the ball and everybody else tried to rip it away from him. It was a game about individualism; there was no teamwork or rules or adults to intervene. It was simply you against everybody else.

Just as life often is in the real world.

But my favorite game was dodgeball. We played it during gym class in the winter months. Mr. Milarsky would take us down to the multipurpose room — it served as the back part of our church on the weekends. Thirty to 40 kids would line up on either side. Then the frenzy began.

Several balls were whipped back and forth until the herd was thinned. If you caught a ball thrown at you, or avoided it, you stayed in the game. If somebody caught a ball you threw, or somebody hit you with a ball, you were out of the game.

I was always among the last survivors, but the kid who won the most was Mike Landy.



**tom purcell**

• commentary

He was quick, agile and cunning. He was near impossible to hit and though he lacked the arm strength to knock you down, he usually figured out a way to catch a ball you whipped at him.

On that particular day, the field was gradually weeded out. Pretty soon, there were two players left: me and Mike Landy. I whipped a ball at him and he dodged it. He double pumped at me, nearly hitting me, but I dodged it. The battle went on for some time until I launched a rocket shot into his gut.

He did something he hardly ever did: He dropped the ball. I won.

It was a great victory that filled me with excitement, pride and, dare I say, self-esteem. It won me the respect of the other kids.

But such games are being squelched these days. The McLean school that banned tag, says *The Post*, established a "chasing, fleeing and dodging" unit. The adult-supervised unit monitors the children and reminds them about playground safety.

That's just what our kids need: more adult intervention.

The ban on tag, it seems to me, is ultimately what the presidential election is about. There are two kinds of people in our country now:

those who are for tag, dodgeball and tug-of-war and those who are against them.

Those who are for them believe that kids — and all individuals — should be able to learn, grow and figure things out on their own. They know there can be no thrill of victory without risking the agony of defeat. Their ideas produce kids who grow up to become independent and productive — individuals who enable great civilizations.

And there are those who want to ban playground games. They believe there should be rules, policies and administrators who monitor, intervene and eliminate all risk in life. Such people demand the government do more to protect and provide — they disdain competition and individualism. Their ideas produce people who are dependent on others.

Our country was founded by people who favored tag, dodgeball and tug-of-war, and their ideas produced the greatest country in the history of mankind. But the dodgeball-banners are trying to take over. Every election cycle, they demand our government do more — that our politicians use our tax dollars to "give" us more.

If that crowd takes over, one thing is for certain. Fewer kids will experience the thrill I knew the day I beat Mike Landy at dodgeball.

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## Saving the children is our job

In the sad case of the children caught up in the maelstrom of the Fundamentalist Latter Day Saints alleged child abuse matter, I tend to fall onto the church side in the separation of church and state.

The state is ill-equipped to deal with 400-plus youngsters it has torn from the bosoms of their mothers in the guise of protecting them from alleged abuses.

In considering this case it's important to keep in mind some rather unpleasant facts:

In America, there are over 500,000 children in foster care;

Approximately 300,000 kids are taken out of their homes every year because of neglect and abuse, and put in foster care;

Some 73 percent of the children put in foster care end up on the streets, or even worse, in jail;

Even though some 100,000 of these 500,000 youngsters are available for adoption, only a pitiful 1.2 percent will ever be adopted.

These statistics should concern every American. It's obvious that the government, which is great at starting wars and taxing the citizenry to pay for some of the worst hare-brained schemes imaginable, hasn't got the slightest idea of how to raise children.

They know how to take children from their homes but they don't know how to raise them once they've got them in their hands. Yet the idea that the government is better equipped than parents to raise children is widespread among the big-brother liberals who lust after inserting the power of the state into the very heart of the American family.

The reality is that when you take children from their mothers and put them in the hands of the state or its subordinate agents you ultimately do more damage to them than almost any abuse they might have suffered at home.

This is why I am calling on the Christian community and the churches to step up, take the children from the government, and assume their responsibility to keep these families together.

We need about 500 churches to take in 500



**michael reagan**

• making sense

families. These children should be with their mothers, who are as much victims as their children are alleged to be. Splitting them up from their mother and their siblings is not going to be performing a service to these kids.

Just because we don't agree with their lifestyle does not necessarily mean that we can do a better job than the mothers can do in raising them.

We should keep in mind that the allegations against the church people remain speculative and unproven, yet the government rushed in and disrupted whole families on the basis of a single phone call from a teenager who, if she even exists, can't be found.

We've been through all of this kind of thing before. In the McMartin pre-school case during the 1980s, California government agencies acted on rumors that turned out to be absolutely false.

As Doug Linder wrote in 2003, the resulting McMartin Preschool Abuse Trial, which he called "the longest and most expensive criminal trial in American history," created a seven-year, \$15 million investigation that led to not a single conviction.

"More seriously, the McMartin case left in its wake hun-

dreds of emotionally damaged children, as well as ruined careers for members of the McMartin staff," Linder recalled.

I'm not saying that the current Texas case is a replay of that notorious miscarriage of justice, but we surely must keep in mind the lessons it taught us about rushing to judgment and endangering the welfare of children before the real facts are known.

In the meantime, the Christian community needs to come forward and provide homes for the families and their children until all this can be sorted out.

Finally, as an afterthought we should be thankful that it is not Bill Clinton's Attorney General, Janet Reno, running this operation against the church in Waco-style. If she were, by now the moms and their children would probably all be charred bodies in the smoking ruins of their compound.

Mike Reagan, the elder son of the late President Ronald Reagan, is heard on talk radio stations nationally. E-mail comments to [Reagan@caglecartoons.com](mailto:Reagan@caglecartoons.com).

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