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"Freedom of the Press belongs to those who own one."

A. J. Liebling of the New Yorker

June 14, 2001




Commentary

Taking the Point Position...

I *t is instructive that on the Island of Kauai there is a Birkenstock store, but you can't get Fox News Channel. The politics of Kauai are what my calculus professor would call "Three Sigma" - three standard deviations (left) of the norm, wherever you think the norm might be.*

Kauai is the modern staging area for the Sandalistas, those sandal-wearing American lefties who trekked to Nicaragua to support Daniel Ortega. Actually, those people are now working on Wall Street, but their ideological kin are here waiting for the Sandanistas to rise again in some country.

Not just any country, of course, but some warm country. Even Berkley would be too cold, as would Ann Arbor, so it will have to be Indonesia or the Fiji Islands. The transportation infrastructure is ready here also - original VW campers circa 1964.

So far the backpack crowd, many of whom live au natural on less visited beaches, are locally non-political. That is to say that they have not joined the local cry for Hawaiian Independence, and I suspect that is because the Hawaiian Independence movement is not exactly a psuedo-intellectual Marxist movement. This is more a poi philosophy and besides, the kanaka moiles don't much like pinko haoles, or any other kind of kind of haoles. Coffeehouse psuedo-intellectuals are innocents that real bloody Marxists can control as 

“ useful idiots” but Marxism is a light year from the interests of the kanakas. They are into bloody Monarchy not Bloody Marxism

These Sandalistas are from a parallel universe, but they are entitled to vote in our country and they vote solidly Democrat. Believe me they do not want drilling in the Artic, or anywhere else for that matter because they do not use electricity in their communes here on the island. They do use a LOT of “alternative medicines.”

The North Coast of Kauai is the absolute world center of “alternative medicine.”

I was in the North Shore Pharmacy just yesterday. The pharmacy has two equally small sections, one for regular pharmaceuticals, and one for alternatives. I was reading some of the alternative medicines, one of which was Toasted Hemp Seeds (packaged in a bottle with the well-known dark-green marijuana leaf), and there were hundreds of large bottles of ground roots and barks.

There are two counters, the one for regular medicine had a line of people you might identify with, dressed in clothes you might recognize - although fewer clothes than is considered normal in most Western cultures. The “regular” counter people were well-scrubbed, had curves where you might expect curves, and spoke words that were semi-understandable - if you understand “Akamai residents know that mauka showers are expected, so watch your kiekies.”

The alternative counter was populated with people you might recognize as human, but probably of the species that we thought disappeared in Europe about 10,000 years ago. They wear lots of clothes, primarily because they have no address at which to store anything.

My conclusion: Using alternative medicines causes people to hitchhike, grow serious facial hair (particularly

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**"Here is to
Woman! Would
that we could fall
into her
arms without
falling into her
hands."
Ambrose Bierce**



the women), have an aversion to Dial soap, and grow flowers in dreadlock hair. Obviously their medicines work well because there were no overweight among them - in fact there was little flesh at all among them. It is hard to believe that their tight skin never gets washed when there is an ocean within a mile of any human habitation, and it rains several times a day and more than 100 inches a year everywhere on the North Coast.

When one of these alternative medicine users has a car it is made of compressed rust, an altogether natural substance. Alternative medicine also impacts the language. Fortunately, I am bi-lingual and understand "Bra' gimme stink eye an' I get chicken skin."

Whatever you think of these people, they are passive and benign. They do not try to convince you to vote their way, or worship their god(s). They are as incredulous about people who lather their faces with cosmetics and then drive an hour in heavy traffic to spend a day being made miserable by their jobs, as we are of their lifestyle.

And often they change. Last year there was an excellent article in The Garden Isle about a young woman who returned for a visit to the commune in which she had lived for several years. She is now a successful marketing person on the mainland, with a good job. There is hope for your children and/or grandchildren.

We regularly see these parallel universe people at the Saturday "farmers market." They shop there because it is next to the Post Office and Saturday morning is RFD at the Post Office. Those who do not have an address can pick up the mail - and shop in the field next door for organically grown veggies at the same time.

For now, it is back to the mainland to go to work.



**A lot of people are better
imagined in your bed
than found there in the
morning.**

P. J. O'Rourke

