

PREFACE

These essays first appeared in my nationally syndicated newspaper column, and the favorable responses they received from readers have led to their being reprinted here. Many of the events which provoked these writings raised questions that went beyond the passing episodes involved. This was especially so where economic issues were involved, for these same fundamental issues recur in the economy over the years—and centuries—in various guises. Similarly, racial issues in the United States today involve many of the same principles that have been controversial in relations between various racial and ethnic groups in other countries and in other times.

In addition to the very serious issues raised in many of these essays, there are also some lighter subjects and even the serious issues sometimes have their lighter aspects. Without a sense of humor, politics would be too painful to bear.

Special thanks must go to the Hoover Institution and to Stanford University, whose rich research sources made informed commentary on a wide variety of subjects possible, and to my assistant Na Liu, whose diligent work unearthed the information that I needed. Finally, acknowledgement is also due to Karen Duryea of Creators Syndicate, who caught errors in spelling, grammar, syntax, and facts that might oth-

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erwise have slipped in these columns, to my chagrin. The same thanks must go to a conscientious copy-editor at the Hoover Institution Press who caught some more lapses of mine.

Thomas Sowell