

Life in the Cherry Pie Factory

Nobody asked but ...

Jokesters will often imply that incompetents would fumble the making of a cherry pie. Often those incompetents are assembled into a statist bureaucracy. But while an association between the postal minions and degraded service is too often accurate, statism does not have a corner on screw-ups. The difference is, among other things, that the bureaucrat institutionalizes the screw-up, but the *entrepreneur* learns from it.

A few days ago, I read a news article on a failure at SpaceX. And for years I have been attracted to stories about mismanagement of resources in complex arrangements. Why must we forget, over and over, Ockham's Razor? The principle reason, I suppose, is our old nemesis — power, and its handmaiden, control. All people are predisposed toward accomplishment, but unfortunately many will choose the appearance over the attainment. Too often too many will trade the short term (control) wherein we pretend that something is true, rather than confess to a failure. If we accept false premises, we can pretend that a train wreck is the emblem of a success — we'll call it The Afghanistan Express.

But, in the long run, a train wreck produces better transportation.

— Kilgore Forelle