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Speaker Spotlight: Richard Vague and Joanne Mariner **by Jacob G. Hornberger**

The two speakers at our June 1-4 conference “Restoring the Republic: Foreign Policy and Civil Liberties” who are being highlighted this week are Richard Vague and Joanne Mariner, two people whose lives can be summed up in one word: Courage.

Richard Vague, one of our conservative speakers, is one of the most successful businessmen in the country. He is the CEO of Barclay’s Bank US, which acquired the company that Vague founded, Juniper Financial. Prior to founding Juniper, Vague was CEO of First USA, which went from a start-up to an issuer of 57 million credit cards. With many American businessmen immediately jumping on board in support of U.S. foreign policy and the “war on terror” after 9/11, Vague is courageously swimming against the tide, devoting much of his time and money trying to convince other conservative businessmen to join him in leading America in a different direction in foreign policy. In his 41-page report, “Terrorism: A Brief for Americans,” 50,000 copies of which have already been distributed to local business groups around the nation, including chambers of commerce, Rotary, Kiwanis, and Lions clubs, he states, “U.S. policies and actions in Iraq and throughout the world have increased world terrorism. War will not rid the world of terrorism. Force does not subdue, it enrages. We have the opportunity to lead the world out of this danger by building up, not tearing down.” If you haven’t read columnist [Jim Lobe’s article](#) on Vague, it is definitely worth a read.

Joanne Mariner, one of our liberal speakers, is one of the most courageous women I have ever had the good fortune of meeting. Every month, I can’t wait to read her monthly article on Findlaw.com. An attorney for Human Rights Watch, she has been relentless in her critiques of torture, rendition, military tribunals, Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib, and other aspects of the “war on terrorism.” Her articles always pack a power that is immeasurable, primarily because of the way she writes — dispassionately, clearly, simply, and truthfully. Her life is not lived in an ivory tower. For example, to research the rape, murder, ethnic cleansing, and other atrocities in Darfur, she traveled there and camped out in the desert among the rebels. Prior to that, to research the problem of rape in American prisons, she conducted personal interviews with prisoners in jails

across the United States, which resulted in a landmark report entitled “No Escape: Male Rape in U.S. Prisons” issued by Human Rights Watch. My hunch is that Mariner’s talk will be like her writing and that it will ultimately rank as one of the most powerful talks at the conference.

Why should people attend this conference? Because of the enormous stakes involved in restoring a free society to our land. Neutrality and silence are not a viable option, not when the road on which our nation is traveling is leading toward perpetual war and loss of liberty. The stakes are obviously doubly high for those who have children and grandchildren who either are of draft age today or will be of draft age within the next few years.

Now is the time for the American people to fight to move our country in a different direction — toward the restoration of a limited-government republic in which people’s rights and freedoms are once again guaranteed. What better way to grasp the principles and the spirit needed to move an entire nation in a better, freer direction than by capturing the principles and spirit within those in whom they already live?

We hope you’ll join us! For the complete conference schedule and all the speaker profiles, go to our [conference website](#). You can register for the conference at the website or by telephoning us at (703) 934-6101.

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