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## A noble, heavenly office



By Carl Prine Tuesday, May 24th, 2011 3:16 pm

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Dr. Christopher A. Preble, the director of foreign policy studies at the Washington, D.C.-based Cato Institute, is one of my favorite wonks.

And I'm not just saying that because we share the same initials.

I don't always agree with him, but I respect his learned competence, erudition and dedication to the complexity of the subjects he explores.

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During the Gulf War, he served as a U.S. Navy officer aboard the guided missile cruiser U.S.S. Ticonderoga. Since he got out, he's written or edited four books. My favorite was "[The Power Problem: How American Military Dominance Makes Us Less Safe, Less Prosperous, and Less Free.](#)"

Published in 2009, Preble's study lays out his concerns that our vast military power could end up corrupting our democracy. He's concerned that our robust – but by no means omnipotent — military might raised the presidency above Congress, drove allies from our fold and plunged our republic into endemic warmaking overseas.

He frets that the very military power we've built to preserve American traditions, freedoms and economic opportunities threatens to become "overgrown" — in the warning words of George Washington – and "[inauspicious to liberty.](#)"

Preble's sentences don't seem like a jeremiad when I read them. They rather form into a lamentation, whispered by a man who loves our nation and our military.

I'm always surprised when my reporter buddies fail to realize that Cato regularly weighs in on issues of war and peace, so I figured some of you might get a kick out of discovering Chris, too.

Always worth hearing.

NOTE: This interview was conducted before President Barack Obama and a handful of Senate leaders began work on confecting a non-binding resolution to keep the U.S. fighting a ~~war~~ "kinetic military action" in Libya.