

Janet Landa's

**Toast and Roast for
Gordon Tullock
Feb. 16, 2002**

On the Occasion of his 80th Birthday, Arlington, Tivoli's Restaurant

[I am so sorry to have to miss the wonderful occasion of the celebration of Gordon Tullock's birthday today: but I am glad that Nic can convey my well-wishes to Gordon]

I like to toast and roast Gordon Tullock. Gordon is like Peking duck: Hard and crisp on the outside, soft and tender on the inside.

As we all know, Gordon is a brilliant man, who puts one fact together with another fact to arrive at a new conclusion, concept or theory. But when I first met him at a Public Choice Society meeting many years ago, I didn't think that he was brilliant. Gordon took a look at my face and my nametag, and said, "How come you look Chinese, but your surname is Landa"? I raised my eyebrow and wanted to give him the finger....

.....[PAUSE for effect] to show him my ring, which I was wearing at that time.

Some years later, destiny brought me to VPI for graduate studies. I enrolled in Gordon's Public Choice course. I cannot remember that I learned much from the course because Gordon was always telling stories—of his days in China, and about Chinese civil service exams. But I did learn a lot of important theories from Gordon outside his classroom: the Buchanan-Tullock description of an optimal decision-making rule, the Tideman-Tullock demand revealing process from Jim Buchanan's Public Finance class; and the Tullock-Brennan experimental game—all of which I transmitted to the students in my Public Choice course. My students especially enjoyed playing the Tullock-Brennan game: this game was first invented by Tullock & Brennan, and played at a Liberty Fund Conference where Robert Nozick organized the group to bid one cent; but Jim acted individualistically by not cooperating with the group: winning the \$50 prize...with a \$7.00 [Pause] I.O.U.

Some years later, I presented my paper on swarming of bees at a conference in which Gordon was my discussant. While I was discussing the traits of the Queen Bee, including the fact that she has a small head relative to her body size; Gordon quickly chipped in "Janet Landa has a small brain". I was not reduced to tears, however, by this classic Tullockian put-down of his female students/former-students because I'm glad that I don't have a large head on my small shoulders.

About 6 years ago, a group of bioeconomists wanted to launch an International Society for Bioeconomics (ISB), and its journal, Journal of Bioeconomics. Gordon, as the first president of the ISB, was very persuasive in whitewashing the heavy workload involved in being an editor of a new journal. I happily accepted the job not knowing until too late how much work is involved in being editor of a journal. It was during this period, that I learned that Gordon has a "soft and tender" side to him. Gordon is always willing to help me in whatever way he could to promote the journal. The Journal of Bioeconomics owes a very big debt to Gordon. To conclude: with my heart-felt feelings, I want to say to you: "Gordon, I wish you many, many more happy birthdays and many more years of brilliant work ahead of you." (560 words; about 5 minutes).