the weekly Standard

FEBRUARY 5, 1996 $2.95

WE WIN

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"The Era of Big Government Is Over."

— Bill Clinton, announcing the surrender of modern liberalism, January 23, 1996

So What's Next? Could It Be...

★ Civil Society?
David Brooks explores the pros and cons of a powerful new doctrine

★ President Gramm?
Paul A. Gigot explains the surprising troubles of a GOP contender

★ A New Reaganism?
John Podhoretz makes the case for rethinking conservative strategy

the weekly Standard

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 20 • FEBRUARY 5, 1996

THE WEEKLY STANDARD (ISSN 1083-3013) is published 50 times annually by News America Publishing Incorporated, 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY, 10036. Application to mail at Second-class postage is pending at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. Send subscription orders to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96153, Washington, DC 20090-6153. Yearly subscriptions, $79.96; Canadian, $99.96; foreign postage extra. Cover price, $2.95 ($3.50 Canadian). Back issues, $3.50 (includes postage and handling). Subscribers: Please send all remittances, address changes, and subscription inquiries to: THE WEEKLY STANDARD, Customer Service, P.O. Box 710, Radnor, PA 19088-0710. If possible include your latest magazine mailing label. Allow 3 to 5 weeks for arrival of first copy and address changes. For subscription customer service, call 1-800-983-7600. Send manuscripts and letters to the editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036-4617. Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. The Weekly Standard Advertising Sales Office in Washington, DC, is (202) 293-4900. Advertising Production: call Natalie Harwood, (610) 293-8540. Postmaster: Send address changes to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 930, Radnor, PA 19088-0930.

Old King Dole

There was almost universal dismay—and some glee in other campaigns—in Republican circles last week about Bob Dole's response to Bill Clinton's State of the Union. The dismay had little to do with the substance, but much to do with the performance: Dole looked by turns nervous, old, halting, and confused. Along with reports of polls showing Dole weakening in Iowa and New Hampshire, the question is whether the State of the Union response will be for Dole what the infamous Roger Mudd interview was for Teddy Kennedy in 1979: the unexpected *coup de grâce* for a campaign that seemed to be riding high.

Meanwhile, Dole is making a not-so-subtle shift in his message, from stressing a balanced budget to focusing on economic growth. Obviously Dole feels pressure from Steve Forbes, but that's not the only reason for the shift. Dole's advisers, especially former Senate aide Robert Lighthizer, are convinced Clinton is vulnerable on the economic issue. Thus, Dole will stress the slowing economy under Clinton and also take a page from Pat Buchanan's playbook by blaming Clinton for the middle-class squeeze, wage stagnation, and the loss of manufacturing jobs. The shorthand for this is the "Clinton crunch," a phrase you'll be hearing a lot more of.

Alphonse and Gaston in Bosnia

David Owen, the co-author of the famously unimplemented Vance-Owen Peace Plan for Bosnia, has got a good thing going with Misha Glenny, the well-known author/journalist and expert on Bosnia. First, Glenny, in his *The Fall of Yugoslavia* a couple of years ago, had nothing but kind words for Owen's diplomacy. Next, Owen, in his recently published apologia, *Balkan Odyssey*, returned the favor by extolling Glenny's book as "the most outstanding account" of the war and "required reading for any serious student." So guess who reviewed Owen's book for the *New York Times Book Review*? That's right: Misha Glenny. Glenny declared that "henceforth nobody can talk authoritatively about the course of this war without engaging [Owen's book] in detail." Glenny is now writing another book about the Balkans. We can't wait for Lord Owen's review.

Boo! A Democrat!

Frank Luntz, the GOP pollster, is frightened. Very frightened. On the back cover of Clinton pollster Stanley Greenberg's 1995 book, *Middle Class Dreams*, Luntz tells readers just how frightened he is of his Democratic counterpart: "Stan Greenberg scares the hell out of me. He just doesn't have a finger on the people's pulse; he's got an IV injected into it. He's the best." Now, we find that there are even more Democrats who frighten Frank. "They scare me. [Clinton] truly has the A-team of political professionals," he said the other week. "I have the highest degree of respect, politically speaking, for Squier, Sheinkopf, Morris, Carville and Doug Schoen. I think they are the best." The obvious question: Would Luntz be willing to admit his "fear" of any Republican competitor?

Don't Mess with Hillary

Hillary Clinton made a startling admission last week on her book tour. The first lady told audiences that she's been defending herself from bullies—like Whitewater inquisitor Sen. Alfonse D'Amato—since her childhood days on the mean streets of Park Ridge, Illinois, a small, upscale suburb 35 miles north of Chicago.

"The kids in that neighborhood would beat me up every day," she was quoted as saying. "They'd knock me on the ground, they'd pull the bow out of my hair. And I'd go running in the house every single day. This went on for weeks. Finally, the inevitable occurred. I went out, I was, you know, beaten up, knocked around, run back in. My mother met me at the door and she said, 'There's no room for cowards in this house. You go back out there and deal with this.'"

Scrapbook

Don't cry for the Little Miss Rodham That Was, though, because according to a 1995 book, she gave as good as she got. The source: her own mother. "When she was old enough to play outdoors by herself, she could beat up on the neighbors' children, but only if she had to. When she did, she'd go out, arms flailing, eyes closed—and whap! She'd get the better of them," explained Mrs. Rodham in *Clinton Confidential*.

No wonder David Watkins was scared of her.

And Speaking of Hillary...

From *It Takes a Village*, p. 59: "It has become fashionable in some quarters to assert that intelligence is fixed at birth, part of our genetic makeup that is invulnerable to change, a claim promoted by Charles Murray and the late Richard Herrnstein in their 1994 book *The Bell Curve*. This view is politically convenient: If nothing can alter intellectual potential, nothing need be offered to those who begin life with fewer resources or in less favorable environments."

From *The Bell Curve*, p. 410: "Lest anyone doubt that environment matters in the development of intelligence, consider the rare and bizarre cases in which a child is hidden away in a locked room by a demented adult or breaks free of human contact altogether and runs wild. . . . From these rare cases we can draw a hopeful conclusion: If the ordinary human environment is so essential for bestowing human intelligence, we should be able to create extraordinary environments to raise it further."

In a spirit of Christian charity, not to say liberal compassion, we hope critics are fairer to Mrs. Clinton's book than it is to other people's work.

The Reading List

Too many of you figured out the deliberate error in the Jan. 22 Reading List to list names here—indicating that it was really an easy one. Yes, as you guessed, Rover was not the name of the dog in *Call of the Wild*. It was Buck.

But we are happy to report that no one has yet figured out the error in the January 29 Reading List. Here's a hint: It's a conceptual error, a plot point; not a name gone wrong. So get out your old issues and go to it.

This week, no error (we think), but rather two overlooked contemporary novels worthy of finding in a library and giving a read, about strong mothers and their daughters—in honor of the poised and impressive Chelsea Clinton:

Their Pride and Joy, by Paul Buttenweiser. A superb novel, published in 1987, about how charitable impulses among the rich—the desire to do the greatest good for the greatest number—can lead do-gooders to ignore the crises that can destroy their own families, their own children.

Mrs. Bratbe's August Picnic, by Jacqueline Wheldon. Published in 1965, this English masterpiece concerns a millionaire female industrialist who gives birth to a modern-day Homer—a daughter who is also a brilliant poet and a clear-eyed critic of her mother.

Casual

From Bradley to Barkley

Maybe I'm slow. But it wasn't until a conversation with my friend Bob that I realized how ideological American sports have become. Bob asked if I'd been to the Washington Redskins football game the day before. Nope, I answered, I gave away my tickets and went to the University of Virginia soccer game instead. Bob was thunderstruck. How could I pass up football for that wimpy, boring sport? It took a few minutes before it dawned on me what Bob was really getting at: I'd passed up a chance to watch a *conservative* sport, football, for a *liberal* one, soccer. Bob was on to something.

Nearly all sports, I've concluded, are either conservative or liberal. Really. The conservative ones are rough, individualistic, obsessed with winning, just as Newt Gingrich is in politics. Liberal sports are non-violent (mostly), collective, and less than triumphal—in a word, McGovernesque. It's obvious boxing, wrestling, football, and basketball (1990s-style), which involve lots of physical contact and one-on-one confrontation, are conservative. But baseball, soccer, and basketball (1960s variety), where violence is supposed to be kept to a minimum and intricate teamwork matters, are liberal. And not as fun to watch.

There are a couple more things that make a sport liberal. If it's one in which women are as thrilling to watch (and almost as good) as men—you know, tennis and swimming and soccer—it's liberal. Or if liberals love to participate in the sport or profess to enjoy watching it, it's also liberal.

Baseball is liberal because liberals have idealized the game. Yes, George Will has contributed to this, but he actually likes baseball. I suspect many liberals who extol baseball don't. After all, the game is often slow and boring. But liberals lurched to baseball's defense when football threatened in the 1960s to become America's number one sport. Liberals hate football. Not only because it's violent, but also because its biggest enthusiasts are southerners and Catholics, two disproportionately conservative groups.

Worse, football players often pray after scoring. Baseball, at the major-league level anyway, is heavily represented in the Northeast and Rust Belt, liberal stomping grounds. To stop football's advance, liberals concocted myths, like the one about a surge of domestic violence during the Super Bowl. Liberals detest the Super Bowl. It's the summit of conservative sports.

There's another telltale sign of a liberal sport: Winning isn't paramount. So marathon running, where the important thing is not finishing first but just finishing, is a liberal's delight. And soccer, in which many games end in ties, is too. The fundamental liberal vision of sports was stated two decades ago by a pro basketball player, Neil Walk. He said no score should be kept. Rather, basketball should be judged like ballet, for its artistry. Walk wasn't kidding. The conservative view was expressed by longtime Redskins coach George Allen (father of the Virginia governor): "Winning is life. Losing is death." Vince Lombardi made the same point: "Winning isn't everything. It's the only thing."

Certain sports are both liberal and conservative—call them Clintonsports. Hockey is the best example. Remember when the Soviets first sent their hockey squad to North America? The players were a model of socialist teamwork. The played hockey the way liberals like. Now contrast them with the star-oriented U.S. and Canadian players, who are frequently selfish, hogging the puck and taking outlandish shots. They play the game the conservative way. Occasionally, there's a happy medium in Clintonsports, a mixture of brilliant teamwork and individual entrepreneurship—the Brazilian soccer team, for instance.

That brings us to basketball, the sport that went from liberal to conservative. The classic liberal team was the New York Knicks of Bill Bradley's day. Bradley had few one-on-one skills. He was "the open man," reliant on others to screen his man so he could get off an unimpeded shot. The Knicks won several championships with that style of play. Basketball isn't like that anymore. The closest thing to the old Knicks is today's Cleveland Cavaliers, and they're barely over .500. Now one-on-one matchups are everything; even the short white guys in the NBA dunk, and basketball is far more exciting. Charles Barkley has replaced Bill Bradley. Barkley, by the way, is a conservative Republican. You know what Bradley is.

But if you're a Gingrichian Knicks fan, don't fret. It's fine to like liberal sports. I enjoyed the UVA soccer game far more than recent Redskins games. Under coach Bruce Arena, who'll coach the U.S. Olympic soccer team this summer, Virginia isn't methodical and low-scoring. The Virginia way combines clever teamwork with individual flair, fast-paced play, high scoring, and lots of victories. A moderately conservative style, I'd say.

Fred Barnes

Intellectuals Prefer Culture

David Brooks offers thoughtful criticism of conservatives who argue that America's central challenge over the next 20 years is to rebuild the family, churches, civic associations, and other institutions of civil society ("Culture Equals Politics," Jan. 22).

He is right to say that the civil society, or citizenship, movement should not and cannot ignore politics and public policy. Hundreds of terrible programs, regulations, and court decisions have to be dismantled or overturned if civil society is to flourish. Culture and politics cannot be divorced: A nation's laws, and the rhetoric of its politicians, send strong signals to its culture.

But Brooks is dead wrong in suggesting that the usefulness of citizenship proposals can be judged by whether "Big Ideas on character" can be translated into "Big Policies."

A great wave of social entrepreneurship is sweeping America, in which new *private* institutions—such as the National Fatherhood Initiative, Prison Fellowship, Teen Challenge, Best Friends, and the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship—are stepping up to the plate to solve problems where Big Government has struck out.

Brooks says arguments about character building will remain "airy-fairy" unless reified into public policy proposals. Nonsense. In many cases new private institutions—colleges, religious movements, charities, business associations, and so on—will be more innovative, less bureaucratic, and more effective than government has ever been.

Adam Meyerson
Washington, DC

David Brooks offers an outstanding critique of the politics-versus-culture debate. He is correct on most counts, but he misidentifies me as a person who has "simply given up on policy and politics."

To raise doubts about politics is not to be anti-politics. It is rather to issue an invitation to acknowledge the depths of our social crisis, to move beyond policy determinism, and to create a politics of prudence and realism, which I maintain most Americans would find appealing. As conservatives, we are discovering that "revolution" in the political realm alone is misleading (as Brooks himself states), not to mention highly elusive.

Even if the current revolutionary program were fully implemented, it would not greatly change moral problems such as teen pregnancy, adolescent crime, father absence, drugs, and divorce.

To be "concerned about the space that is neither government nor market" would seem to be the most distinctively conservative proposition anyone could put forward. The crisis in America is excessive politicization; it is a crisis

rooted in the loss of a realm that is consensual, voluntary, and belonging to the people.

When American life is radically out of balance, the answer is not replacing a crusading liberal politics with a messianic conservative politics—it is to fight to depoliticize society.

The job of politics, in addition to statutory reform, is to "shape the public sentiments," as Lincoln put it, without which policy reforms will be of little effect.

Don Eberly
Lancaster, PA

Please tell me that David Brooks's article was tongue in cheek.

He wonders why "intellectuals have abandoned politics." Because they realize, as intelligent intellectuals must, that social problems are beyond the realm of government. Isn't the failure of the Great Society proof enough?

Should we exchange the current welfare state that is blamed for the moral decline of the country and replace it with another great experiment of policies and programs to change the culture and moral fiber of America? Social engineering doesn't work. Conservatives will lose the debate and the support of the majority of the voters if they sign on to this wacko idea now that they are in power.

Kim Russell
Darnestown, MD

Hillary, Worse Than Nixon

The grotesque caricature of Hillary Clinton and the accompanying article ("The Hidden Tale of Travelgate," Jan. 22) have the stench of blasphemy toward the memory of President Richard Nixon.

I fail to see how attacking her by comparing her to a disgraced fellow Republican would advance the conservative agenda.

Preston P. Birenbaum
Woodland Hills, CA

Herblock in Decline

The parody of Herblock's style (Jan. 22) is your most devastating satire yet.

I used to be quite a fan of Herblock, but then I also used to be a fan of American liberalism. Both national institutions have declined in quality over the past couple of decades, collapsing into petty spite and selective moralizing.

John Lockwood
Washington, DC

The Naked Secular Square

Hallelujah for Jeremy Rabkin's review of *The Godless Constitution: The Case Against Religious Correctness* ("Godless in America," Jan. 22). The professor's solitary weakness is his concession that the book "scores points" against the Christian America claim. To the contrary, authors Isaac Kramnick and Laurence Moore miss God in America only because they know not

Correspondence

where to look.

References to God in our Constitution were gloriously preceded by Thomas Jefferson's Godly Declaration, which formed America's philosophical foundations and set out her creed with, in Chesterton's words, "theological lucidity." Rights were Creator-given, said Jefferson's Declaration, and not the progeny of polls or politics.

In their efforts to cleanse the secular temple, authors Moore and Kramnick overlook the importance of this solemn national acknowledgment of Providence; the same acknowledgment that made America Christian.

ANDREW RUSK
GALVESTON, IN

In his informative review Jeremy Rabkin tells us that "Jefferson, the staunchest advocate of secular government, frequently graced his presidential speeches with religious appeals and Biblical allusions."

Indeed he did. Secular government is good for religion. Religious observance is much higher in the United States than in places like England, where there is an established church.

GEORGE JOCHNOWITZ
STATEN ISLAND, NY

S&M, Washington Pastime

Regarding "It's an S&M Kind of Thing" (Jan. 15), was Matt Labash being tongue in cheek, or did he intend to make a point about amateur voyeurism? Assuming the Casual is just for fun, is S&M what passes for fun in Washington these days?

I guess all of us unsophisticates in the provinces outside the Beltway just don't get this hip stuff.

W.R. WATTS
BEVERLY HILLS, FL

California School Choice

I worked for many months on the voucher initiative in California and thought you might want an opinion as to why it didn't pass ("School Choice is Back," Scrapbook, Jan. 22).

First, Californians are susceptible to religious cults. The fear of any religious training in the classroom caused much hysterical debate. The media ads overpowered the very concept of free choice.

Second, the majority of voters here are unaware of the deficiencies of the structure of the classroom. Many parents have given up trying to have any input into the education system, as this can be *very* unpleasant. Some just don't want their kids to excel academically or be in any way different from the rest of the kids on the block.

Finally, California has lost a whole generation of lazy parents who reflect the mind-set of television programming.

SANDRA PRICE
CAMBRIA, CA

More Hell at Cornell

So now they have come for the professors at Cornell ("Briefing for a Descent into Hell: Today's Campus," Jan. 15). An entirely predictable state of affairs, as when they came for the conservative students, the professors did not speak out.

As a contributing editor to the conservative *Cornell Review*, I witnessed firsthand just how destructive a joint effort by the daily student newspaper and assorted student-assembly rah-rahs might be when aimed at individuals disfavored by the radical-culture guerrillas.

A main target at the time, a classmate of mine, was a promising student with excellent grades and a perfect LSAT score. But after being the obsessive subject of the daily newspaper's editorial and cartoon staff, he was finally led to a hearing before a faculty committee. He had to plead with uninterested and unsympathetic professors not to put him on academic suspension.

I'll never forget the look on his face when he came out of that meeting. I suspect it's a look that will be worn upon the faces of many of the professors who haven't bothered to concern themselves with political repression on their campus.

ALAN GURA
ELIZABETH CITY, NC

I Do Want a Devolution

Both in court and out, Clint Bolick has done much to defend personal liberties. However, despite his charge ("Leviathan in the Suburbs," Dec. 18), devolution is not a danger to these liberties.

Bolick criticizes those he believes offer devolution as a "one-size-fits-all" solution to our policy problems. In fact, devolution is a program to lift the dead hand of Washington from our states and communities so that they can flourish in all their variety.

Besides being closer to the people and better acquainted with local circumstances, communities offer one supremely valuable guarantee of liberty: freedom to exit. In America's states and localities you have a means by which people can protect their rights and express their disapproval: They can move on to the next town, the next county, or the next state.

This not only allows the citizen to find a community he or she finds suitable, it also allows citizens to combat the growth of government. When a town like Alexandria starts losing too many businesses it will have to reconsider its oppressive bureaucratic policies.

Devolution will not bring utopia, but it will allow communities and citizens to work out better, more responsible, and more limited government arrangements. We should not throw away this opportunity to resuscitate democratic experimentation in the hope that we will get all the reforms we want at the national level and somehow permanently hold power and thwart liberals from ever reversing them.

SPENCER ABRAHAM
UNITED STATES SENATE
WASHINGTON, DC

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We Win

The era of big government is over." With these words, in his State of the Union address, Bill Clinton announced the surrender of modern liberalism and conceded victory to conservatives. We win.

Okay, so we haven't won *yet.* The era of big government isn't *quite* over. American government is, after all, as big as it's ever been. The Republican Congress has been stymied in most of its efforts to make it appreciably smaller. And Bill Clinton's concession is in any case rhetorical and insincere.

But rhetoric matters. And, as Michael Kinsley once pointed out, insincere flattery is the most sincere form of flattery, since it testifies even more convincingly to the power of the person or idea being flattered. It would mean little if a Republican president proclaimed the end of the big-government era. But the Democratic party is the party of big government. It created big government; its historic role has been to defend it, to manage it, to extend it, to try to perfect it. The Democrats were once proud of this role. Now, after three years in office, a Democratic president proclaims the end of the cause to which his party has heretofore been dedicated.

It took Gorbachev three years in office fundamentally to subvert his party's claim to rule. Clinton has had three years; he is the Democratic party's Gorbachev.

He didn't plan to be. When he addressed Congress three years ago, he said, "I believe government must do more." Two years ago, he threatened to veto any health-care legislation that fell short of creating a huge new government entitlement. A year ago, after the 1994 election, Clinton was willing to acknowledge that we had to "change the way our government works to fit a different time." Now the force of the tidal wave of 1994 has become fully apparent; Clinton is cheerfully deserting liberalism's sinking ship.

And he announced this desertion with what may be the only memorable sentence of his presidency. Fifty years from now, "The era of big government is over" will be (along with his pre-presidential "but I didn't inhale") the only quotation from Bill Clinton memorialized in history textbooks. One phrase that won't make it, also spoken in the State of the Union, is "the Age of Possibility." Once upon a time, liberals were confident that they were ushering in an Age of Enlightenment. Then came the Age of Progress. Then the Age of Aquarius. But the Age of Possibility? Not even the Age of Probability?

> DECADES FROM NOW, "THE ERA OF BIG GOVERNMENT IS OVER" WILL BE THE ONLY QUOTATION FROM BILL CLINTON INCLUDED IN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS.

In any case, this will not be the Age of Clinton. It's possible, of course, that Clinton's gambit will pay off in the fall campaign. He is infinitely willing to stoop to conquer, and conquer he may—though the odds still look very good to us that he will be a one-term president. But with one term or two, Clinton has no serious role in shaping the new era. That is the conservative opportunity. And that task demands a different approach than did the previous conservative work of resistance and opposition.

The task of conservative governance requires intellectual boldness. Thinking through the path to a re-limited government and a re-moralized society will be more challenging than elaborating the critique of the welfare state. The road to serfdom is easier to identify than the road to liberty. The intellectual habits of opposition—excessive pleasure in a "gotcha" approach

to the left, a corresponding susceptibility to infatuation with silver bullets of the right—will have to give way to a more serious but also more ambitious conservative intellectual enterprise.

At the same time, the fact of conservative governance requires a greater understanding of the day-to-day necessities of practical accommodation and political prudence. To sink the boat of liberalism, it was necessary to fire away. To ride the new tide of conservatism, it is necessary to keep the boat afloat and steer it through the rapids. That may mean slowing down occasionally, tacking to the center at times, and reassuring some of the more reluctant passengers that the boat is in good hands. This will require a new suppleness in conservative political strategy and a new evenness in conservative temperament—it will even mean, as the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page (!) allowed this week, occasionally realizing that there is a "time for patience."

But these are tasks for the weeks, months, and years ahead. For now, conservatives should remember: Magnanimity in victory—but not too much. ♦

The CIA Goes P.R.

by Richard Pollock

On January 4, the front page of the *Los Angeles Times* extolled a string of untold Cold War successes of the Central Intelligence Agency. Reporter James Risen dwelt especially on one feat of "American bravery," when CIA agents installed eavesdropping equipment in tunnels and sewers below Moscow. It was, indeed, a gripping tale. How it came to be printed is an interesting story, too.

Risen himself dropped a hint. "For reasons of secrecy," he wrote, "the public has not been told about the exploits of the CIA's sewer rats. But, now, with the Cold War over, the arguments for secrecy are beginning to appear less compelling. Within the U.S. intelligence community, officials feel a deep and spreading frustration that the public never hears about their triumphs, only their travesties."

THE CIA HAS BEEN ENCOURAGING JOURNALISTS TO WRITE "GOOD" STORIES ABOUT THE AGENCY. OPENNESS, THOUGH, CAN BOOMERANG.

The fact is that for the last year, the CIA has been encouraging journalists to write "good" stories about the beleaguered agency. Touted as a drive for "openness," the publicity campaign appears to have a dual—not to say an ambiguous—purpose: It is both a good-faith effort to rebuild credibility damaged by the excesses of an obsolete culture of secrecy, and a standard public-relations response to the agency's very public humiliations.

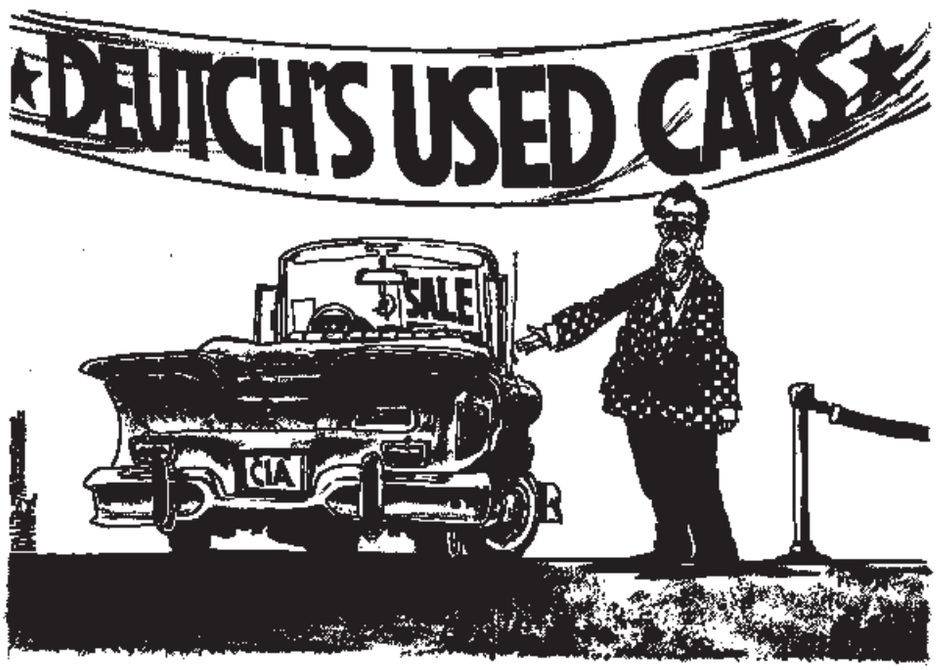
Spearheading the effort is no less a figure than the new director of central intelligence, John Deutch, who advocates opening up the entire intelligence community to the public and to Congress. The main reason for openness, Deutch told me in his office at CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia, "is that the CIA has lost a good deal of credibility" through recent scandals. He cited Aldrich Ames, the spy arrested in 1994 who was able to operate as a Soviet mole undetected for 10 years in the very heart of the agency's secret Directorate of Operations, and recent publicity over unsavory CIA connections in Guatemala in the 1980s. He might have added the agency's appalling treatment of a senior female agent, who eventually secured a $410,000 settlement of her sexual harassment suit in 1994.

In addition to those major embarrassments, Deutch mentions an even more basic challenge to the agency: "After the passing of the Cold War," he says, "people are asking themselves, 'Well, do you still need a secret foreign intelligence service?' It's a legitimate question. And if you want the support of the American people, and support of their representatives in Congress, they have to understand how the agency operates."

In recent years, the agency has quietly released an unprecedented amount of previously classified material. Viewers of *NBC Nightly News* saw anchor Tom Brokaw report on the CIA's new role in combating the drug trade. The agency disclosed how the supersecret National Reconnaissance Office handed over classified satellite photos to environmentalists at the U.S. Geological Survey; how the agency is sharing its "facial recognition technology" with the Immigration and Naturalization Service to help catch criminals crossing our borders; and how it has helped disaster-relief workers fighting forest fires. Last year the CIA

released the VENONA papers, which show how the United States intercepted, decrypted, and translated messages from Soviet KGB and military intelligence agents to their operatives in North America from the 1940s to the 1960s. And Deutch himself conducted an extraordinary CIA conference on Operation CORONA, at which Air Force and CIA reconnaissance photos taken over the Soviet Union were released. The director even posed with two of his deputies for a cover of *Parade* magazine.

Dennis Boxx, a 24-year career public affairs officer, is directing the CIA's new campaign for openness and good publicity. He explains it this way: "There's a growing sense in the agency that we can no longer say, 'Well, only our failures become public. Our successes can't.' That's amended to say, 'many of our successes can. Where we can, it's important for people to know."



Many former directors of central intelligence endorse the initiative. William Colby, appointed by President Nixon, feels that with the end of the Cold War, the call for secrecy ended. "As much as possible," he says, "is open." Former director Robert Gates, deputy director of the CIA under President Reagan and named to the top job by President Bush, echoed Colby. "Most everybody knows everything about our failures. The only thing we're keeping secret are our successes."

So the steady stream of deliberate leaks continues. Boxx has created a "strategic planning" staff who decide which success stories can be released. Many of the new public affairs staffers came from the Pentagon and worked with Deutch when he was undersecretary of defense, before assuming his post at the CIA.

Rather than simply manage daily crises, Boxx explained, he and his staff aimed to identify "stories that we thought told the message the American people should hear . . . These are not 'made up' things. They are legitimate stories that are important to let the American people know about." Boxx's office tries to spark reporters' interest in covering particular stories.

Not everyone in the agency is enthusiastic about all the public exposure. "This is new turf for the CIA in a lot of ways," admits Boxx. Inevitably, there is some reluctance to step out. In particular, field agents who have worked in the Directorate of Operations object to talking publicly about secret missions.

Among other problems, publicity could dry up the recruitment of informants and agents. As one former field officer put it: "In the past, if you told an agent-candidate that you wanted a secret relationship, he'd believe you. Honestly, I don't think I could talk to an agent-candidate today and be sure he would be safe."

And openness can boomerang. The recent disclosure by the *New York Times* of a CIA operation targeted against the Japanese in the midst of trade talks caused an uproar in trade circles, but the worst damage might have been to CIA operatives in Asia. A former senior intelligence official familiar with the operation called the disclosure "absolutely ruinous" to CIA overseas operations. "It simply makes the life of the agent, who is out there trying to do his work and recruit people, almost impossible," he said.

Another potential problem is that allied intelligence services, fearful of their own secrets' becoming public, might stop sharing intelligence with the United States. "Insofar as you expect Mossad [the Israeli intelligence service] or MI-6 [the British intelligence

service] to share secrets with you, or insofar as you expect some renegade member of Hezbollah to agree to tell a case officer what's going on inside the organization, forget it," a former intelligence official fumed.

In the end, removing secrecy from intelligence gathering may be an impossible task. Former director of central intelligence Richard Helms, who spent his entire working life at the agency, summed up the problem this way: "When it comes down to it, openness and espionage are indeed a contradiction in terms, and if anybody thinks that they're going to change espionage to meet the American liberal view that such a thing shouldn't exist and therefore the public should know a lot more about it and be able to criticize it, the fact remains that there is no way to 'modernize' it or 'turn it around' or 'make it look different' or make it look 'sweet' when it's really sour. It's just not to be. And the idea that 'Well, now we're in the 1990s and we're going to modernize espionage' is sort of pointless talk."

At bottom, a democratic society's requirement of governmental openness is simply at odds with its need for the dirty work of espionage. It is no solution for an agency like the CIA to administer carefully controlled doses of upbeat information to reporters. To be sure, much of what has been released recently belongs in the public domain, and its publication may deservedly raise morale at the CIA. But it will also be seen by outsiders as self-serving. Implanting a new culture of openness at a spy agency may be more problematic than the current reformers think.

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Fevers, Fires, Floods, Oh My!

by Ronald Bailey

When it comes to trumpeting the apocalypse, global warming alarmists have few peers. There is no type of weather calamity they will not seize on—even an epic blizzard—as a herald of the catastrophic warming they say the planet will soon undergo. As the East coast was digging out from its recent snowstorm, *Newsweek* devoted a cover to the counterintuitive proposition that the blizzard of '96 might have been caused by global warming. According to *Newsweek*'s puissant analysis, if it's too hot, it's global warming; if it's too cold, it's global warming; if it's a drought, it's global warming; if it's a flood, it's global warming; in fact, if you don't like the weather, it must be global warming.

> ACCORDING TO *NEWSWEEK*'S PUISSANT ANALYSIS, IF IT'S TOO HOT, IT'S GLOBAL WARMING; IF IT'S TOO COLD, IT'S GLOBAL WARMING.

Like the pedestrians who walked down the middle of streets after the recent blizzard, *Newsweek* was not striking out on its own but rather following a route already well plowed. At a meeting of environmental-movement leaders last summer in New York, sponsored by the W. Alton Jones Foundation, a slogan was coined to encapsulate the global-warming-causes-everything approach: Fevers, Fires, Floods, and Famine. *Fevers*—as temperatures rise, tropical diseases like malaria and dengue could invade the temperate latitudes. *Fires*—global warming could cause longer droughts, leading to massive fires like the ones that burned down half of Yellowstone Park in 1988. *Floods*—warmer temperatures could cause bigger rainstorms and also lead to higher sea levels, as the result of melting ice caps in Antarctica and Greenland. *Famines*—global hunger would worsen because the world's breadbaskets would be blasted by years-long droughts.

This alliterative slogan—to which we can now apparently add frostbite, freezer burn, and frozen pipes—was designed to launch a campaign to put global warming back on the public agenda. The results have been a flack's dream—widespread, uncritical media acceptance of simplistic doom-saying.

All fall, the major media amplified the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's finding that humanity is having a "discernible" impact on climate. The crusade reached a peak of sorts in the Jan. 4 *New York Times* front-page headline " '95 Hottest Year on Record As the Global Trend Resumes." The networks soon followed the *Times*'s lead, as did *Newsweek*. And the mainstream media aren't alone in pushing global warming. Even

the venerable *Journal of the American Medical Association* got in on the act last week, coordinating the simultaneous publication by some 30 medical journals of special issues devoted to hyping the idea that climate change would make diseases more prevalent (Fevers, remember).

The hottest-year-ever stories were based on data from the British Climate Research Unit at the University of East Anglia. Only one problem—1995 was *not* the hottest year on record. NASA satellite data say that 1995 was an average year temperature-wise, *only the eighth warmest* year on record.

Another problem: The East Anglia temperature record was for only 11 months—temperatures for December (generally a pretty cold month in the Northern Hemisphere) were "statistical estimates." Why didn't the scientists at East Anglia wait for the actual December numbers to come in, instead of rushing off to declare 1995 the hottest year on record? One climate scientist at NASA speculated that the East Anglia group was afraid that if they waited, December temperatures might plummet and they'd lose their opportunity for a scary headline. They were prescient. Global temperatures in December did a nosedive, the biggest one-month drop in the last 17 years, according to NASA.

What's really been going on with the climate? The computers relied on by global warming proponents say that the planet's average temperature should have increased slightly since 1979. But that hasn't happened. Instead, the earth has been cooling by a tiny bit over that period, according to NASA satellites. NASA climate researchers Roy Spencer and John Christy, using these satellite data, calculate that the earth may warm almost imperceptibly (about a tenth of a degree per decade) in the years ahead.

And the real news in the UN panel's report was barely noticed. Their estimates of global warming in the next century have been cut in half. Global warming skeptics have long argued that as computer climate models were improved, the amount of warming they predict would go down. The skeptics were right. The lower bound of the UN panel's predictions—a warming of less than one degree Celsius by the year 2100—conforms with Spencer and Christy's warming calculations based on satellite data.

This is far from the apocalyptic predictions of rapid warming bandied about at the 1992 Earth Summit, which persuaded world leaders to sign the Framework Convention on Climate Change. Under the convention, countries including the United States agreed to set as a goal cutting their carbon emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000. A proposal made at the March 1995 Berlin meeting of the climate convention signatories would have the industrial countries cut their carbon emissions to 80 percent of the 1990 level by the year 2005. Economist David Montgomery, who worked on the UN report, estimates that the cost of meeting the 2005 goal could be as much as $300 billion a year for the United States alone. An important new study published in the current issue of *Nature* concludes that we needn't take drastic action now to curb fossil fuel use, because technological innovations and judicious capital investment will likely reduce carbon dioxide emissions before they become a problem. This means no need for the huge taxes on coal, gas, and oil that some in the Clinton administration pressed for in 1993 and that are still being promoted by the Worldwatch Institute and other global warming activists.

In short, we now know that if the *Times* had not been so eager to jump on the global warming bandwagon, it could have run headlines like "'95 Eighth Warmest Year on Record" and "Global Warming Predictions Cut in Half." And *Newsweek* could have profited from a bit of Freudian skepticism: Sometimes a blizzard is only a blizzard.

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Boris's Furious Fist

by Charles H. Fairbanks, Jr. and Elshan Alekberov

THROUGHOUT ITS SEVEN LONG DECADES, the Soviet Union was a stifling police state. Never was fear abandoned as a tool. But after Stalin's death in the early 1950s, there existed a kind of taboo against wholesale slaughter. Individuals continued to be persecuted, of course—countless of them—but the destruction of entire villages and groups was avoided.

Lately, however, a new (and old) wind has been blowing in Russia. It could be felt in the recent taking of hostages by Chechens and the bloody Russian reprisal against it.

On January 9, Chechen commander Salman Raduyev and 300 of his men eluded the tens of thou-

sands of Russian troops occupying Chechnya and advanced to the town of Kizlyar, in the neighboring republic of Daghestan. Raduyev seized some 3,400 hostages—the largest number in memory—and hunkered down in a hospital. Russian president Boris Yeltsin ordered the Daghestani government to negotiate. During the night, an agreement was reached: The Chechens would release the bulk of the hostages in exchange for safe passage back to Chechnya; about 120 hostages would be retained, to be freed once in Chechnya, so as to ensure that Russia kept its end of the bargain.

What happened next is related by a hostage who escaped, in a widely disseminated report:

> All were happy when the Chechen border was crossed. We thought it was all over. We would soon be free. And then the military helicopters over us began to fire rockets. Windows burst in many buses. There were shouts. The column turned from the border and went back to Daghestan, to the roadblock near the village of Pervomaiskoye. There we stopped. The gunmen rapidly and without a single shot disarmed the policemen who manned the post. Scores of choppers began to land on the field near the village; paratroopers were jumping out of them.

The Russian police minister acknowledged afterward that the plan had been to double-cross the Chechens and the Daghestanis who did the negotiating. Several ambush sites had been prepared.

Of course, no government is obliged to honor an agreement made under duress (though sometimes it is prudent to do so). What is remarkable about Yeltsin here is the insolent way he used the Daghestani negotiators and his complete indifference to the lives of the hostages. The newspaper *Moskovskaya Pravda* was forced to conclude: "Human beings in this country are of no value."

WHAT IS REMARKABLE ABOUT YELTSIN IS THE INSOLENT WAY HE USED THE NEGOTIATORS AND HIS COMPLETE INDIFFERENCE TO THE LIVES OF THE HOSTAGES.

Then began a new round of negotiations, which served to mask Russia's further military preparations. On January 15, two hours after Daghestan's interior minister avowed that negotiations were "developing normally," Russia launched an all-out assault "to free the hostages." Russian spokesmen circulated, then withdrew, various lies to the effect that the Chechens had killed, or were about to kill, the hostages. In fact, a majority of the hostages survived; the Chechens themselves faced what appeared to be certain death. The next day, Yeltsin revealed his true policy toward the nettlesome (and, to be sure, terrorist) Chechens: "They have to be wiped out." Added Gen. Mikhail Barsukov, the KGB's domestic minister: "A Chechen can only kill, and if he cannot kill, he turns to armed robbery, and if he cannot do even that, he burgles houses. There are no other Chechens."

Astonishingly, the Russian siege of Pervomaiskoye—a tiny village of about 30 houses—went on for more than three days. The village was at last leveled by artillery and rocket fire, much as the Chechen city of Grozny had been destroyed a year before at a cost of 20,000 to 30,000 lives, most of them Russian, not Chechen.

Shortly before the end, almost half of the Chechen fighters—with the help of a relief force that somehow managed to penetrate the Russian double ring—fought their way out, dragging about half the hostages with them. Remarked Gen. Barsukov: "The only thing we could not expect was that the gunmen would run so fast." On January 22, Salman Raduyev staged a defiant press conference from his native village of Novogroznenskoye.

Russian actions in all of this signaled quite a change from the early years of Boris Yeltsin. But they were not, as some now contend, a return to former Soviet ways, at least not to post-Stalin ones.

The last general secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, Mikhail Gorbachev, knew in 1990 that his political survival depended on snuffing out the Lithuanian independence movement. But he would not do it. He allowed the security police to try some brutal half-measures; he allowed the job to be botched; he allowed public outcry to abort any attempt to do the job thoroughly. In retrospect, that fatal hesitation looks oddly like conscience.

In August 1991, Gorbachev's hardline opponents faced the same dilemma when they organized their coup. They knew that the coup would fail unless the largely unarmed democratic crowds in and around the White House were crushed. But they could not, or would not, do it. Chernenko, Andropov, Brezhnev, Khrushchev, Malenkov, Beria—none of these ruthless Communists dared do what Yeltsin did: destroy a whole city. A taboo had formed deep in the Russian consciousness, proscribing mass bloodletting. Now that taboo is broken, imperiling the Russian future.

A taboo of this type is far stronger in societies that have suffered from totalitarianism than in countries like the United States. Americans have sometimes objected that their German allies, for example, are excessively fastidious about the uses of their army and the sale of arms. Yet the experience of totalitarian

life—its violence and coercion—sinks into mass consciousness and reappears as a reflexive fear of bloodshed.

True, some political taboos are made to be broken. But in Russia's present situation, the informal rules and limits of politics are unusually helpful. Russian impulses to reform are weak and becoming weaker. As contrasted with the American and French revolutionaries of the late 18th century, today's Russians have little desire to build new political institutions in place of fallen ones. What offers hope is that Russian tendencies toward communist nostalgia, anti-Western resentment, imperialism, military rule, violence, and civil war are hemmed in by constraints. Some of these constraints are formal (the reconstituted Communist Party hopes to achieve power by winning the June presidential election); others are psychological (the population is disillusioned, undisciplined, and exhausted). Where democratic institutions are new and fragile, the key task is to prevent political decisions from being made in the primitive way: by armed force. And where the military is seethingly resentful, economically desperate, and nostalgic for the old order, it is unwise to habituate troops to the killing of innocent civilians.

> AS CONTRASTED WITH AMERICAN AND FRENCH REVOLUTIONARIES, TODAY'S RUSSIANS HAVE LITTLE DESIRE TO BUILD NEW INSTITUTIONS IN PLACE OF FALLEN ONES.

Can it possibly be in the interest of the elected president of Russia to legitimize civil war as a means to power? Perhaps the root of Yeltsin's new direction is the difficulty of retaining his office by other means. As he loses public support, he is increasingly driven to rely on brute force and the men who can execute it: the KGB, the police, the army. But these traditional agents of force have grown incompetent and undependable. Under the old Soviet bureaucracy, a strongman could be more certain. At play were the vital elements of ideology, "democratic centralism" (obedience to Party bosses), and fear. When these disappeared, the organizations began to fall apart.

The Pervomaiskoye operation and the whole Chechen war demonstrated that the security police and the army are no longer competent. First, they tried arming and organizing Chechen proxy forces against Dzokhar Dudayev, the dominant Chechen leader. Bungling this, they tried similar "surgical" operations with Russian elite forces. When that failed, they resorted to mass bombing, shelling, and rocketing by huge numbers of ordinary Russian troops. This, finally, succeeded in driving Dudayev from Grozny and Raduyev from Pervomaiskoye.

But it is turning into a vicious cycle. The iron fist has succeeded (after a fashion) only when massive forces have been assembled for the crudest, most indiscriminate kinds of attack. The incompetence and brutality of the government's new methods are mutually reinforcing. The president becomes dependent on additional strata of the KGB and the army. By agreeing to slaughter, he breaches the social consensus against bloodletting. By breaching consensus, he drives away his few remaining supporters . . . and the cycle begins again: Yeltsin's camp constricts to a handful of corrupt cronies who could never survive his retirement or ouster, while he spreads through Russia a widening circle of ruin.

The present course cannot end well. If Boris Yeltsin does not break loose from it, he will go out like a Scythian king, with thousands immolated on his grave.

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THE STAKEHOLDER COMETH

by Irwin M. Stelzer

London

AFTER DECADES OF SEARCHING, the British left may have found what it calls "a big idea," one to put it back in the big leagues with the conservatives who have dominated the intellectual agenda for the past two decades. Tony Blair, the personable leader of Britain's opposition Labour party (and, if the polls are right, soon-to-be prime minister), decided to shuck off his reputation as an intellectual lightweight. So he used his Christmas holiday in Australia to do some-

thing few politicians this side of Renaissance Weekend find the time or inclination to do: think. The result is the "stakeholder economy."

The term "stakeholder" refers to everybody who has an interest in a corporation: not only those who own stock, but managers, workers, vendors, and unspecified others. The stakeholder economy is based on "trust" (Blair gives full credit to Francis Fukuyama, whom he describes as "an economist of the right who is nonetheless concerned at the selfish individualism of parts of Western society"). Its purpose is to create a "cohesive society . . . with a strong sense of purpose and direction."

Implementation of Blair's vision will require reform of the welfare state, which has succeeded neither in alleviating poverty effectively nor in assisting what Blair terms "the growth of independence, the move from benefit to work." It will require maintenance of a "disciplined . . . macroeconomic and fiscal policy." And it will require government policies to ensure that the riches of economic growth are fairly distributed among a population that the government will ensure has benefits from equal educational and vocational opportunities.

Vague stuff, to be sure. But forgivably so: The idea was presented in a speech, and was not intended to be a detailed road map. And ideas do travel—Reaganism and Thatcherism had common intellectual roots, and Joe Biden ripped off Neil Kinnock's memories of football in 1988. You can be sure the "stakeholder economy" will be echoed in the speeches of Bill Clinton, Robert Reich, Robert Rubin, and all the rest of the gang as surely as the latest English fashion is headed for the showrooms of Ralph Lauren.

CONSERVATIVES RAISED THREE OBJECTIONS TO BLAIR'S SPEECH: IT CONTAINED NO IDEAS; IT CONTAINED DANGEROUS IDEAS; AND IT STOLE THEIR OWN IDEAS.

Tories raised three objections: first, Blair's speech contained no ideas; second, Blair's speech contained profoundly dangerous ideas; third, Blair's speech stole their ideas. Some claimed that the stakeholder concept was so vague that it was impossible for them to comment on it. Others contended that the idea was quite clear, and would inevitably require an enormous government bureaucracy to implement it. Still other Tories claimed that Blair's ideas were their very own—why, witness the number of stakeholders created by the Conservative government's policies of selling shares in the once publicly owned gas, electric, telephone, and water companies to millions of citizens, and allowing residents of government-owned houses and apartments to purchase them on reasonable terms! Such is the incoherence to which the post-Thatcher Conservative party has been reduced.

Which is a pity, because the idea of a "stakeholder" society demands attention. It is the theme that unifies left-wing policies in the post-socialist age. Most remarkably, it traffics in facts, not dreams. Blair recognizes that in a competitive, globalized economy there is no hiding shoddy, costly products behind a wall of tariffs lest living standards suffer. Financial markets will not tolerate the inflationary budget shenanigans of previous Labour governments, and tax-and-spend-and-redistribute policies have gone about as far as they can go without destroying incentives to work and investment. Blair even goes so far as to acknowledge that the welfare system needs to be overhauled, and that many of the Thatcher-Reagan reforms, even those that diluted the power of the trade unions, were for the better and should not be reversed.

But he does not stop there. No, argues the modern left, the achievements of the recent past are not good enough. And in this the left is not alone, at least not in America. Observers as far apart politically as Reich and Charles Murray seem to agree that America is becoming a variant of Latin America's highly stratified society, with upper- and lower-income groups separated by sturdy fences woven of money and patrolled by private security forces. And one-time political opponents like Pat Buchanan and old-line trade unions unite in their fear of international competition and technological change to appeal to a middle class made insecure by the downsizing of large corporations.

So, too, in Britain. Few are prepared to defend a status quo that sees families disintegrating, pensioners too frightened of increasingly violent muggers to step out of doors even in the late afternoon, taxes rising, and the value of homes declining. Little wonder that Blair's "big idea" is receiving so much respectful attention.

That idea calls for a basic change in the way businesses are organized and run. Maximizing the profits of shareholders is to be replaced by maximizing the well-being of all the corporation's stakeholders—its workers, customers, and the community in which it is located.

"We cannot by legislation guarantee that a company will behave in a way conducive to trust and long

term commitment," Blair said. "But it is surely time to assess how we shift the emphasis in corporate ethos from the company being a mere vehicle for the capital market . . . towards a vision of the company as a community or partnership in which each employee has a stake."

There are many ways to view this redefinition of the role of the corporation. It is, of course, a transfer of property rights from shareholders to stakeholders—a kind of taking of property without compensation. It is also a way of imposing on corporations the cost of job training and other schemes the left realizes it can no longer pay for with tax revenues. Or it can be seen as an effort to reestablish union power by putting workers in the boardroom where they just might achieve what is no longer attainable on the picket line. Tories will make all of these arguments, with some justification.

Tony Blair

But these complaints fail to address the more fundamental issue raised by Blair: the role of the corporation in the political life of a modern economy. To argue that corporate managers, largely immune from removal by shareholders in all except the most extreme circumstances, are out to maximize profits is to ignore reality. Irving Kristol has pointed out that "the large corporation has ceased being a species of private property, and is now a 'quasi-public' institution." As such, he argues, these institutions "are not supposed simply to be efficient at responding to people's transient desires . . . but are rather supposed to help shape . . . the people's character, according to some version—accepted by the people itself—of the 'public good' and 'public interest'."

At that crucial point Blair and Kristol part company. Blair would have the government see to it that workers are given "representation, consultation and prior notification of major events," in the words of the *Guardian's* Will Hutton, who serves as amplifier and expositor to Blair in much the way that Reich does for Clinton. If a legislative realignment of investor, worker, and customer rights is required, so be it, although Blair has made clear his preference for moral suasion.

This expansion of the role of government is precisely what Kristol, no defender of corporate perks, has warned against: The danger, he says, "is that the large corporation will be thoroughly integrated into the public sector, and lose its private character altogether. The transformation of American capitalism that this would represent . . . does constitute a huge potential threat to the individual liberties Americans have traditionally enjoyed."

But this fear is not likely to deter Blair's American fans, Reich in particular, from taking up the British Labour leader's challenge to redefine the role of the private corporation in American life to include attention to all its stakeholders. And don't expect America's managerial class to object. Its leading members have long sought relief from the demanding imperatives of profit maximization, and hanker for a kinder and gentler corporate life in which an overstaffed business can be explained away as a commitment to "stakeholding." Alas, only a dwindling band of true, red-blooded free marketeers will hold out for the unambiguous verity of profits, profits, and more profits.

Whatever the outcome of the debate, we can at least thank our British cousins for forcing us to think again about whether our biggest companies should keep their noses to the profit grindstone, or assume the role of their stakeholders' keeper.

Irwin M. Stelzer wrote about the Conservative and Labour party conferences last year for **THE WEEKLY STANDARD.**

'Civil Society' and its Discontents

By David Brooks

We are all cultural conservatives now. In his State of the Union address this year, Bill Clinton borrowed a notion from the Promise Keepers, the evangelical men's group, that a father's checkbook will never be a substitute for a father's love. He endorsed school uniforms and attacked the decadent media. He could scarcely draw breath without praising churches, synagogues, and community organizations. He paid far more attention to cultural issues than Robert Dole did in his response, and outflanked Dole on the right. We now have a consensus in this country, at least in the realm of presidential politics. Bureaucratic means to address social problems have failed; local and religious institutions can instill conservative social values. The political class is uniting behind positions that conservatives have supported for a long time. So perhaps this is a time for rejoicing.

Wait.

A lot of people, Clinton apparently included, praise civil society the way they praise motherhood; it's just a vague piety. But there is now a voluminous and often brilliant literature on civil society, and it is not always vague and saccharine. It is ambitious, it is radical, and when people start taking it seriously, many are going to find a lot to oppose.

Civil society theory begins with the notion that America, though based on liberty, is being undone by excessive liberty. Unchecked individualism saps institutions, like the family, that build character. Unfettered choice weakens the bonds that keep us together. "Americans are worried above all about the unraveling of the orderly, coherent, authoritative moral community that they were once able to build around themselves within their own strong, local civil institutions," write Michael Joyce and William Schambra of the Bradley Foundation.

Read again the key words in that sentence. *Order. Coherent. Authoritative.* There you have the ethos of much of this literature. The adherents of "civil society" want individual choice to be exercised inside a thick web of local bonds. They want to restore the authority of local figures, like principals and priests, and to enforce community standards of decency. Maybe it has something to do with the baby boomers turning 50 that we have this renewed emphasis on order and coherence. But you don't have to be a devotee of Ayn Rand to be taken aback by it a little. We can all agree that standards of decency should be applied to other people's behavior, but do I want to be subject to the social pressure of my neighbors if they decide I'm not behaving according to their standards? Do I want local busybodies with piddling township posts exercising their petty powers by looking into my affairs?

> ORDER, AUTHORITY, AND DECENCY ARE THE BYWORDS NOW, NOT THE REAGAN-ERA VIRTUES OF AUDACITY AND HIGH AMBITION, SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND PRIDE.

Notice how civil-society theory differs from the conservative ideology of the 1980s. In the Reagan years, the virtues of the entrepreneur were celebrated—audacity, high ambition, self-sufficiency. And since it was the climax of the Cold War, conservatives celebrated the virtues of the combatant: courage, steadfastness, might, and pride. Describing the qualities Margaret Thatcher tried to instill with her policies, Shirley Robin Letwin called these the "vigorous virtues." It was a worldview in which competition was thought to bring out the best in people.

The virtues celebrated by the civil society theorists are quieter, but also tougher. Self-restraint comes first. "What we have to do is to face the fact that we cannot give in to all of our desires," Bob Dole said in his response to the State of the Union. More broadly, the civil society types emphasize family commitment and civic duty. They are not hostile to rugged individualism, but their emphasis is different. Civil society

theorists tend to emphasize community more than the heroic individual, organic structures more than dynamic change, local serenity more than national greatness, authority more than freedom, stability more than change. Don Eberly, president of the Civil Society Project, recently listed the "six pillars of character." They are, according to him, trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. Those are all fine qualities, but they are not courage, audacity, creativity, strength, genius, and high ambition.

The civil-society theorists also have a distinct view of how character is formed. Much of their writing analyzes the "social ecology," the interlocking system of attachments that provides the environment for our lives. These habitats form character, they say. "No habits of mind and heart can be cultivated unless the institutions of society support and 'teach' these capacities," argues William M. Sullivan. Good individuals depend on good families, good families depend on good neighborhoods. "To improve the conditions for childrearing in America today," writes sociologist David Popenoe, "nothing may be more important than trying to protect and cultivate those natural, tribal- or village-like communities that still remain." Sullivan and Popenoe are writing in a superb anthology edited by Mary Ann Glendon and David Blankenhorn called *Seedbeds of Virtue* (seedbeds being one of the many environmental metaphors used by the civil-society folk).

THE HEROIC SCHOOL BELIEVES CHARACTER IS THE PRODUCT OF ADULT EFFORT; CIVIL SOCIETY THEORISTS FOCUS ON ITS ABSORPTION IN CHILDHOOD.

We've long heard about environmental causes for bad behavior, but usually that talk comes from the left. Liberals are famously obsessed with root causes (another environmental metaphor). But under the influence of civil-society thinking, root-cause-ism is now taking root on the right. "The root cause of crime is spiritual, a hardening of the heart that makes a man or woman indifferent to the rights of others," writes Adam Meyerson in a letter to readers in the redesigned *Policy Review*. "The most effective institutions in criminal justice will therefore be those that create moral communities and transform individual attitudes and behaviors."

Such root-cause-ism can either be applauded as an ambitious effort to see problems in their true light, or deplored as a way of thinking that will lead to a wild goose chase while excusing individual misbehavior. After all, the successful anti-crime efforts in places like New York don't address root causes—character. They concern themselves with *symptoms*—crime.

Now contrast this with the conservatism of the 1980s, based as it was on a heroic vision of character development. Man is the one animal who rises above his environment, and character is a kind of metal one constantly forges for oneself. We are supported by others, but character is forged when people struggle through difficulty. It is forged in business competition, in military duress, in the demands of family, in the normal challenges of life. It is only when given maximum freedom to strive and struggle that one can develop the willpower that is the basis of character. The heroic school believes character is the self-conscious product of adult effort; the civil-society theorists focus more on childhood as the age when good character is absorbed.

Civil-society theorists tend to value stability over what Joseph Schumpeter called the "creative destruction" of capitalism. They believe the things that are destroyed—close communities—are more important than the things that are created—new companies, new wealth, new opportunities.

David Popenoe is the strongest advocate of the need for stable living conditions. In his essay in *Seedbeds of Virtue* he lists the optimum conditions for childrearing, the first being: "Children need and want social stability and stable social structure. They want to feel psychologically and socially secure in a place where they can 'belong.'" Popenoe summarizes recent sociological research and offers a recipe for building a healthy community. First, foster residential stability. Second, enforce community moral standards. Third, provide many public facilities. Fourth, favor the development of smaller cities and towns. Fifth, support local political and social autonomy. Sixth, promote functional balance (don't have one place for shopping and one for living, but instead integrate these functions). Seventh, protect homogeneous neighborhoods.

In his outstanding book *The Lost City*, Alan Ehrenhalt describes communities that had many of these qualities—neighborhoods of Chicago in the 1950s. He believes we should try to replicate those conditions, but he is hardheaded about how controversial the re-

creation of such communities would be. He titles his first chapter "The Limited Life" and emphasizes that those lamented communities were based on limited opportunities. People stayed close to home, women had limited opportunities to work, people had limited access to the elite WASP world, people had very little privacy (of course there was community, since people were rarely alone). These communities, Ehrenhalt shows, were based on virtues like obedience to authority: "Community means not subjecting every action in life to the burden of choice, but rather accepting the familiar and reaping the psychological benefits of having one less calculation to make during the course of the day." He argues that most Americans would gladly give up a measure of choice and change for security and stability.

That is a highly questionable notion. My family once lived in a tight, fabled community, the Lower East Side of Manhattan. They partook in some institutions that fostered community and stability; my great-grandfather was a butcher, and he got together with the other chicken butchers to set prices and thus stabilize the market. But as soon as he made some money he moved away from that community. He moved uptown.

The long history of America shows that people use their liberty to move away from tight communities in search of greater opportunity and autonomy. Moving across the ocean, moving uptown, and moving west are central to the American experience. The tight communities of the 1950s helped produce the reaction of the 1960s and the feminism of the 1970s—people seeking greater freedom and opportunity. It's likely that this particular dash toward opportunity and upward mobility is now considered a mistake by most people—certainly there is a backlash against feminism—but I doubt large numbers of people have given up on the idea of expanding opportunity. There's little evidence that people are hungering to be more deferential or to have fewer choices.

THE LONG HISTORY OF AMERICA SHOWS THAT PEOPLE USE THEIR LIBERTY TO MOVE AWAY FROM TIGHT COMMUNITIES IN SEARCH OF GREATER OPPORTUNITY.

Perhaps the most radical element of civil-society theory has to do with its ambivalence towards the strong, twentieth-century nation-state. "A united United States is a historical construction that most visibly comes into being as a cause and consequence of American involvement in the Great War," writes Jean Bethke Elshtain, in an echo of Robert Nisbet. "Prior to the nationalistic enthusiasm of that era, America was a loosely united federation with strong and regional identities." Joyce and Schambra identify the creation of a "national community" as a Progressive-era effort to weaken local communities and replace them with national rule by experts.

Is America's national might really synonymous with Progressivism and war-mongering? You don't have to be an American Gaullist to value national unity and to worry that America would be weakened if emphasis were to shift to local communities. Can local communities be healthy if the national culture emanating from Washington, New York, and Hollywood is not? Can America remain a great power in the world if its citizens are as parochial as the Swiss? One of the striking currents in Bill Clinton's State of the Union speech was his conscious play on the idea of loyalty to nation, emphasizing national unity and the common concerns of all Americans. Such emphasis in a speech like that can only be poll-driven, which means national unity is still an idea Americans cherish.

Similarly, the civil-society theorists' flight from bigness also means that they have relatively little to say about the greatness of cities. But ambitious Americans still flock to cities, even many who write about local communities.

And so, all this talk about building local communities is not just do-gooder mush. It is, instead, a hardheaded agenda that requires some revolutionary change. Where you come down on it will probably depend on how you feel about populism.

The civil-society movement is a brand of populism. It looks to local communities to provide moral renewal, not to elites. It is inspired by the moral-renewal movements of the 19th century, which were often scorned by the educated elites of the time. But most important, the content of its morality is populist. It revolves around the day-to-day virtues involved in neighborliness, self-restraint, and childrearing. The most famous institution in the civil-society movement is the most populist, the bowling league, the decline of which is lamented by Robert D. Putnam. When Harvard professors worry about bowling leagues, populism is in full roar.

There is of course another morality, one which rarely speaks its name. Tocqueville, to whom the civil-society theorists look first for inspiration, was not a believer in the "limited life." The gravest threat to

Tocqueville returns.

America was not civic disintegration, Tocqueville said, but rather the decline of ambition: "What frightens me most is the danger that, amid all the constant trivial preoccupations of private life, ambition may lose both its force and its greatness, that human passions may grow gentler and at the same time baser, with the result that the progress of the body social may become daily quieter and less aspiring."

But aspiration is taking a beating these days. Consider Clinton's speech. Here was a man who doesn't own a house praising neighborhoods. Here was a man who spent his life dreaming of the White House praising local institutions. Here was a man who has spent his adulthood networking with elites praising the superior virtues of regular folks. A man like Bill Clinton should be praising worldly, ambitious men like himself. He should be emulating George Washington, Winston Churchill, and John F. Kennedy, drawing inspiration primarily from the great achievers of history, not from bowling leagues.

The civil-society theorists are producing the most provocative writing on social policy at the moment. They are raising difficult, complicated questions and following their judgments bravely to their conclusions.

And in truth, they have anticipated most of the objections that can be leveled against them. But their emphasis on stability and small communities doesn't suit an ambitious, dynamic power like America. This is not Europe; Americans can't sit still. We can't solve social problems by taming ourselves. We're still a country too young to settle down. ♦

I, Phil Gramm

By Paul A. Gigot

If Phil Gramm's presidential bid fails, political coroners might fix its demise at his meeting last summer with Steve Forbes. With the publisher mulling his own White House run, here was Gramm's chance to listen, to sound themes Forbes wanted to hear, to consolidate support.

Instead Gramm started talking, as he so often does, about himself. He described how he would beat Bob Dole, how he was the only candidate who could. He talked about fund-raising, organization, his by-now-legendary computer list of supporters, and his strategy. The one thing he barely mentioned was cutting taxes. Winding down his monologue, Gramm finally asked Forbes for his thoughts. "You just keep doing what you've been doing, Senator," Forbes replied. Within weeks Forbes was a candidate himself, spending millions on a message Gramm had spurned and, at least at this writing, emerging as the strongest challenger to Dole.

Only a year ago the smart Republican money was betting on Phil Gramm to play that role. Bob Dole was to be the favorite of the party establishment. Lamar Alexander, remade from his Bush years, was bidding to be the outsider. But Bill Bennett, Dan Quayle, Jack Kemp, and Dick Cheney had all dropped out, leaving the way clear for Gramm to unite the GOP's nominating wing of conservatives. While Pat Buchanan would run, he couldn't win. Phil Gramm was poised to be Ronald Reagan's heir.

That Gramm has failed in that effort, at least so far, is one of the biggest surprises of the 1996 campaign. Especially given his many political strengths. The Texan may be the smartest presidential candidate since Nixon. He has a solid conservative record. His signature lines—"I know who I am; I know what I believe in"—are designed to convey his toughness and willingness to stand alone against Washington, in contrast to the deal-making Dole. And these claims have some credibility given his early opposition, back in 1993, to the Clinton health care plan. Gramm's attacks pulled that debate to the right—and right out from under the White House.

Yet this same stubborn strength of conviction has also turned out to be an ironic source of weakness for Gramm as a presidential candidate. His self-absorbed meeting with Forbes is notable not because it is unique but because it echoes so many others. Gramm is running a campaign out of his own hip pocket the way Dole did in 1976 and 1988. He is his own political strategist and his own policy adviser. A joke among Texas politicos describes a Phil Gramm strategy session: Phil and his mirror. Ronald Reagan liked to use the democratic "we," as if he were speaking for a movement and eventually the country. Gramm speaks and thinks in terms of "I," which has hurt his attempt to inherit the movement.

> GRAMM IS RUNNING A CAMPAIGN OUT OF HIS HIP POCKET, THE WAY DOLE DID IN 1976 AND 1988. HE IS HIS OWN STRATEGIST AND HIS OWN ADVISER.

Gramm, who has a better sense of humor than most people know, even jokes about this trait himself, trying to turn it into a virtue. Before a gun owners rally in Manchester, N.H., this month, Gramm put it this way: "The job of your staff is to give you bad advice. Your job is to ignore it." One of his friends says only two people can give Gramm advice he'll actually heed: his wife Wendy and his best friend in the Senate, John McCain.

More than once Gramm has followed his own advice headlong into avoidable trouble. The first was giving everyone in New Hampshire the idea that he wanted to undermine the state's primary. Every four years one candidate or another thinks he can somehow dodge the Granite State. This time Gramm dallied with both Arizona and Delaware as they tried to outmaneuver New Hampshire's first-in-the-nation status.

The Texan was warned repeatedly—by advisers, by

Paul A. Gigot's column appears Fridays in the Wall Street Journal.

GOP Gov. Stephen Merrill—how damaging this would be. He didn't listen. Three New Hampshire Republicans say Gramm promised them personally he'd defend their state's ability to remain at least seven days ahead of all others on a 1995 visit to Delaware. But when he spoke in Delaware he never mentioned the seven days. The episode hurt Gramm with two institutions that once thought of endorsing him: Gov. Merrill and the *Manchester Union Leader*. "He comes across, before public groups and in private, as not really listening, but telling people," says Joe McQuaid, editor of the *Union Leader*, which later endorsed Buchanan. Gramm is now running fourth in New Hampshire.

One plausible Gramm selling point was that only he had a message to unite both social and economic conservatives. Yet his "I, Gramm" style managed to alienate important members of both groups early in the campaign. His disastrous meeting last spring with Christian radio broadcaster James Dobson has been well reported. "I am not a preacher," Gramm told Dobson. The episode allowed Buchanan and Alan Keyes to portray Gramm as a "libertarian" uncomfortable with social concerns.

Sean Delonas

More damaging still was its timing, coming as it did when Dole was traveling to Hollywood to attack Hollywood mores. The Dole speech made a splash and helped Dole with the Christian right. Gramm tried to recoup by giving a widely advertised commencement address at Jerry Falwell's Liberty University. The candidate took a speech draft from Quayle writer John McConnell and rewrote most of it himself. It elaborated on a favorite Gramm theme: The only real obstacle to a revival of American virtue is big government. He hardly mentioned the broader culture or other sources of cultural rot. He even took a shot at "politicians who lament the passing of America's virtues and call for a moral revival."

Gramm is right that smaller government can unite social and economic conservatives, but he then undermines that very unity when he suggests that politics is separate from culture. He likes to say that the job of "Caesar" (the politicians) is to shrink the state, while the job of moral revival is best left to "God" (religion). He seems to abjure any role for a president in encouraging such a revival, or even speaking to the country's best moral instincts. There is a libertarian consistency to this. Yet it overlooks what many conservatives, not to mention most Americans, want to hear from their political leaders. Reagan understood that politics is, in part, preachment.

In the event, the speech fell flat; it seemed to be following in Dole's wake and pandering to a Christian crowd. "At a critical early moment in the campaign, when it came to gaining the support of social conservatives, Gramm was playing defense when he should have been playing offense," says the Christian Coalition's Ralph Reed, who has remained neutral in the GOP race. While Gramm has since made inroads on the social right, especially in Iowa, that early misstep gave the Dole camp a wedge to split off support.

Gramm's biggest self-inflicted wound, however, was in giving little credence to the GOP's tax-cut wing. Especially after Kemp dropped out, these free-marketeers should have been his. It wouldn't have taken much to get them. He might have endorsed a version of the flat tax, or even simply made tax-cutting and optimism a more prominent part of his message. Several advisers, and Forbes in two different meetings, urged Gramm to do so. But in late 1994 Gramm had made his own political judgment that the main lesson voters had sent that year was to cut spending. "It is clearly what our mandate was in that election," he told me at the time.

That judgment happened to fit conveniently into the broader Gramm vision of politics going back to the 1980s. Even in the Reagan years, he was always a spending-cuts-first man. Gramm, the free-market economist, would never fall for Lester Thurow's brand of "zero-sum economics." Yet his political model is surprisingly zero sum. You're either pulling the

wagon, as he likes to say, or you're riding in it. Democrats like to take money from families to give to government, so the Republican agenda should be to take money from government to give to families.

This is a reductionist political vision that is very un-Reaganesque. While Reagan assailed government, as Gramm rightly does, he also offered tax cuts to lift the boats that'd be pushed from their government docks when spending was cut. But Gramm, in attacking Forbes, claims that Reagan's approach failed in the 1980s. Gramm says that only by cutting spending first can Republicans get the money to cut taxes. "I believe that deficits matter in a very powerful way," Gramm says, while bouncing around his New Hampshire van, "because unless you deal with the deficit, you will never be able to get support for the growth incentives you're going to need."

But Forbes isn't saying that deficits don't matter. His point is that only by cutting taxes and spurring the economy can Republicans maintain the political support to cut spending. Forbes wins the political argument, in my view, when he says: "If Ronald Reagan had just passed spending cuts, he'd have been a one-term president." The trouble Republicans have had cutting spending even in this "revolutionary" Congress is more evidence for Forbes's point of view.

CONSERVATIVES DON'T FIGHT MODERATES IN THE GOP; THERE AREN'T ENOUGH LEFT TO FIGHT. INSTEAD, THEY COMPETE WITH EACH OTHER.

Forbes's sudden rise would also suggest that Gramm's political judgment on tax cutting was wrong. This month the Texan implicitly admitted as much by introducing his own version of a flat tax. Yet it comes late, and on the stump Gramm still introduces his proposal by saying, "The most important tax reform is not spending the money."

For all of his talk of political bravery, Gramm takes a far less daring approach than Forbes by retaining the deductions for mortgage interest and charity. He even walks away from the capital gains tax cut, except for indexing for inflation. "I don't think taxing wages and capital at the same rate is sustainable in a democracy," he says. That may be safer politically, but it's strange to hear Phil Gramm waving the white flag at Democratic class-warfare attacks.

One virtue of stubbornness is that it keeps you driving despite the polls, and Gramm, in his relentless fashion, claims to be right on course. "I believe that's going to happen," Gramm says about conservatives unifying behind him. "But I believe it's going to happen late. For a number of reasons, people did not focus on this race early. There were lots of diversions."

His strategy now is to win in Louisiana (where only he and Buchanan are playing) to give him a lift into Iowa. Gramm has spent lavishly to build an organization in Iowa that he hopes will propel him past Forbes into second in the caucuses. He's been hitting social conservative themes hard, hoping that in the end Keyes and Buchanan supporters will move to him as the only one of those three who can win.

Gramm hopes that finishing second in Iowa will then lift him from his current depths in New Hampshire. Forbes is an obstacle, but Gramm is counting on his new flat tax proposal combined with his balanced-budget pitch to prevail.

"Our polling shows that the balanced budget is the most important issue by far. The flat tax is seventh or eighth," Gramm says. If he's close to Dole in New Hampshire, then the campaign moves to Gramm's strength in the South, where it will be a two-man race.

It's a plausible scenario, especially if Forbes can't translate his polling support into actual votes on Iowa caucus night. But it had better work, because Gramm all but admits that he won't have enough money to survive past South Carolina on March 2 without showing early strength. The renowned fundraiser has turned out to be a legendary campaign spender. He wasted some of it on 1995 straw polls that counted for little. He has to hope he hasn't wasted it on his Iowa organization.

The intriguing question is how well he'd be doing if Forbes hadn't entered the race. Some voices on the right have lately been lamenting that conservatives are falling for the liberal sin of factionalism. *National Review*, which once tried to unite the right, now attacks Forbes as a "spoiler" whose candidacy will hurt its favorite, Gramm. And it's true enough that conservatives no longer fight moderates within the GOP; there aren't enough moderates to fight. They compete with other conservatives to influence the Republican message.

The task of political leadership is to offer a vision large enough to encompass these competing wings. Gramm says he knows what he believes in. But he'd be a stronger candidate if he had reached out earlier to persuade more conservatives that he believed in what they believe in. ♦

A Reaganite Reconsiders

By John Podhoretz

REAGANITES, we called ourselves—and though we came in many different guises and had many different obsessions, we shared one predominant quality throughout the 1980s: We were proudly unyielding, immune to compromise. We considered ourselves at war—against the Soviets on the march around the world and the America-haters on the march inside our own institutions and culture. And given such conditions, the word "compromise" was about as popular with us as the word "Munich."

"Compromise" was the seduction offered by the serpents in the Rose Garden. Their names were legion to us—Baker and Deaver, Darman and Gergen. Their skepticism about the supply-side tax cuts, their willingness to sacrifice the defense buildup, their obvious unease with the Strategic Defense Initiative, their quiet hostility to the pro-life cause, their lack of interest in the contras, their passion for summitry with the Soviets—in short, their overall dedication to procedure over substance and image over principle—made them our nemeses. Indeed, we came to dislike these senior officers in our own camp more than our enemies on the left. So the Democrats and liberals were bad news; so what? After all, what could you expect from such people? They had been trying to destroy the country for years. The true villains were those who (we believed) were sacrificing the principles of Reaganism because they thirsted for Establishment respectability. For a Reaganite, there could be no worse accusation than that some Bakerite was behaving as he was because he sought favorable treatment by the editorial pages of the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*.

Though we called ourselves Reaganites, we were not the usual members of the cult of personality that surrounds all presidents. We were not campaign workers; we weren't all that interested in the profession of politics altogether. We were idea warriors. Since many of us had come to political life not through partisan associations but through intellection (magazines, universities) or interest groups (the New Right), our fidelity was first and foremost to the ideas we believed in—ideas that had been given practical political life by Ronald Reagan.

Reagan threw our disparate obsessions into a blender and came up with a new political melange that oozed over old boundaries and eventually hardened into new ones. He was the binding glue for people who actually had little in common culturally or politically—anti-Communists, pro-lifers, anti-Keynesian economists, libertarian government-haters. What we came, in 1980, to admire most about Ronald Reagan (someone few of us would have voted for in 1976) was precisely the quality that horrified the established political order in Washington—his supposed "extremism," his ornery commitment to a set of unfashionable ideas.

So we formed a new political alliance, this alliance against compromise, and one of the things that bound us together was our disappointment with the Reagan administration. We believed that Reagan believed as we believed, but that he was, for various reasons, incapable of fighting the lonely battle for the sanctity of these ideas in the upper reaches of his government (and, indeed, in his own bedroom). "Place not your trust in princes," we counseled one another whenever we found ourselves done in by another Reagan compromise. The supply-siders had their Kronstadt with the 1982 TEFRA tax increase. The pro-lifers saw their cause slighted, year after year, by a president who would not even appear in person at their annual rally but rather talked to the crowd by phone. The libertarians were heartbroken by the administration's half-hearted efforts to cut down on regulation. The foreign-policy hardliners were horrified that the president who said he would never negotiate with terrorists began doing just that with Iran, and then cut loose the selfless patriots inside his government who found themselves subjected to the worst kind of political persecution for the crime of attempting to fulfill their president's policy.

Throughout the Reagan years, we sought policies tougher than those the administration could bring itself to support. We wanted cabinet departments abolished; one was added. We wanted summits with the Soviets canceled; they increased in number. And we wanted the government shut down. Let it close! we

said. Sequester! Time and again the Democrats sent the president foolish and spendthrift budgets for which Reagan mysteriously got the blame. So, we yelled, show the public you don't want to spend the money! Go to the mattresses! we cried (a phrase we learned from our favorite movie, *The Godfather*). Reagan never did, not really.

If this was what we suffered with Reagan, the most ideological president of the century, what would we get with Bush? We were prepared for what Bush might do, the compromises he might strike—and with the still-amazing exception of the Gulf war, he lived down to our expectations. It seemed there would be no appropriate outlet for our passion.

And then came the election of 1994, and the emergence of the energized House leadership and the 73 Republican freshmen who seemed to find the very idea of compromise as abhorrent as we did. The freshmen had come to town as revolutionaries, as harbingers of sweeping change, and they were going to make it happen. They were remarkably cohesive both as a team and as an ideological force from the moment of their election. And with a Republican leadership shorn of the squishy, self-defeating moderate types who had dominated it for so long, we saw a remarkable phenomenon: At last, *Reaganites* were in charge of the legislative process. Finally, *Reaganites* had the reins of power on Capitol Hill. They cared about principle, an uncommon thing in politics. And they, too, understood that the lesson of the Reagan years was that compromise was a bad thing. Vital political arguments must be fought to the finish.

Of course, this portrait of the Reaganites both past and present is drawn in broad strokes, but its essence is accurate. Washington had a hard time understanding the ethos of the Reaganites in Reagan's day, the same trouble it is having with the Republican freshmen right now, because both have a remarkably selfless approach to politics. They are committed more to ideas than to people; animated more by conviction than by a desire for personal glory; committed to battle because they believe that, unchecked, the country and the world are headed for disaster.

Be careful what you wish for, says the proverb, *for you may get it*. The conduct of the budget negotiations with Bill Clinton these past few months has been a Reaganite's dream. They played hardball. They passed appropriations bills that are, by Washington's standards, models of ideological rectitude, and devised a balanced-budget plan that is, again by Washington standards, remarkably honest. They preserved the proposed tax cuts. And they took it, really took it, right to Clinton. For a second time, in December, they told him: *Do what we say or we'll shut the government down.*

And Clinton, mindful of the fact that the first government shutdown worked to his political advantage, said, *fine*.

No, really, they said. *We will*.

And Clinton said, *fine*.

And they knew him to be a compromiser, knew him to be a wimp, knew him to be a man of government, and they said, *Here we go.*

And Clinton said, *fine*. And they shut down the government, something Reaganites had been arguing for year after year during the Reagan presidency. And, to the horror of most of us, this proved a gigantic tactical error. Though the Reaganites knew they were right, and Clinton was wrong; though they knew they were honest, and he deceitful; though they knew they had the political wind at their back and Clinton was fighting to preserve a dead coalition; nonetheless the public blamed them, blamed the Reaganites, for the trouble.

This crucible requires a reevaluation. When your most cherished ideas about how politics works undergo the rigors of reality, you can no longer hide behind theory. You have to examine them in full blossom to see whether they are beautiful or weedlike, whether they smell wonderful or lousy. The shutdown was a tactic I, for one, had longed to see in use because it seemed to me it would make the case for conservatism better than anything else. People would realize that the federal government did little for them, and they would see Clinton as the defender of bureaucrats and fiefdoms.

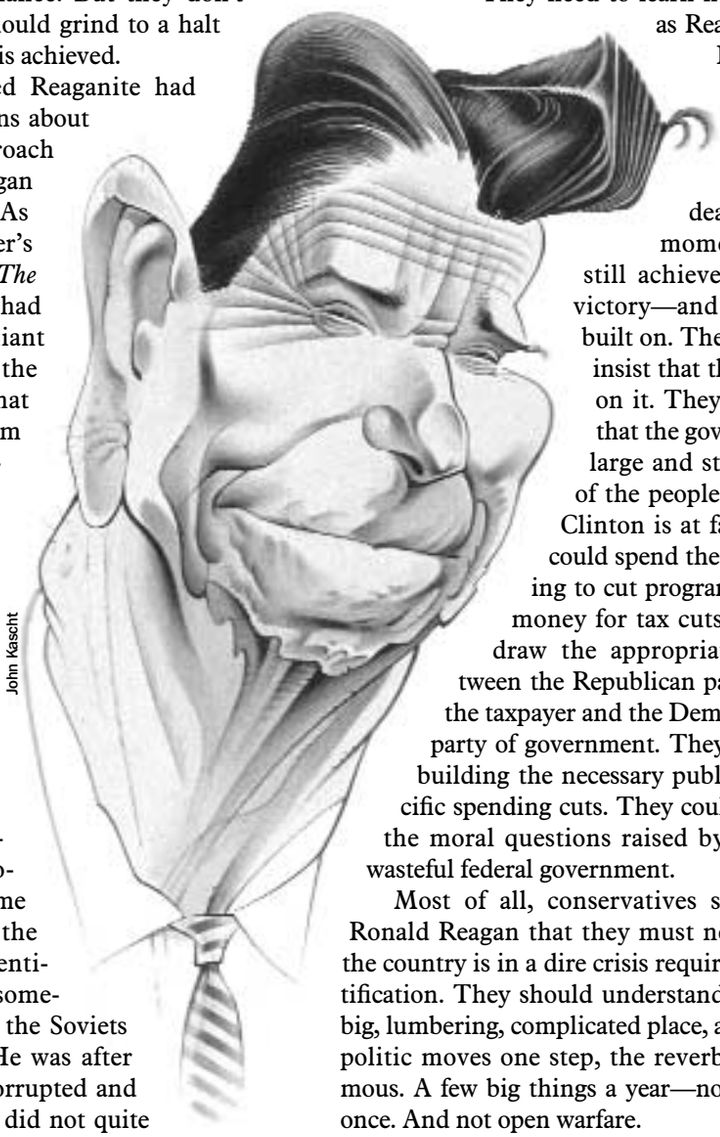
But I was wrong, in large measure because the attitudes of ideological people like us bear little relation to the attitudes of ordinary people. We live in a world where we can see how ideas transmute into policies that either help or hurt people. These are life-and-death issues to us. You can't compromise with the future of the United States simply because you don't have the votes to override a presidential veto.

This attitude only proves how divorced we can be, all we Reaganite populists, from the American public, whose foremost interpreter we profess to be. The American people apparently don't think the world is going to hell in a handbasket. They may think it's on the wrong track, but then, they also tell pollsters they're pretty happy as a rule. And they don't see what all the hysteria is about in Washington. Where they work and live, they don't get to spend their lives in

principled fights over first principles. They make deals. They pay their bills. They hate their bosses and swallow their anger so they don't get fired. They may dislike their neighbors, but they achieve a chilly modus vivendi.

And so the Reaganite passion for purity meets its match in the sensible worldliness of the electorate. The federal budget has been out of balance for 26 years, and the sky didn't fall in. All things considered, the public wants it in balance. But they don't think all of Washington should grind to a halt before a consensus about it is achieved.

Of course, an educated Reaganite had already learned some lessons about the uncompromising approach from discovering how Reagan conducted the Cold War. As detailed in Don Oberdorfer's vitally important book *The Turn*, by 1983 Reagan had already begun his brilliant strategy of trying to edge the Soviets into reforms that would unravel their system while simultaneously taking a hard line and spending money on defense like crazy. It was Reagan's perception—not his handlers', as his handwritten letters to Soviet leaders demonstrate—that the internal contradictions of Communism could not long survive exposure to the West in full economic and social throttle. The discovery of Reagan's two-tiered approach put to shame those of us who spent the 1980s worried that the sentimental president would somehow lose his nerve toward the Soviets as his predecessors had. He was after bigger fish, the end of a corrupted and dying system, a system we did not quite believe would collapse.



John Kascht

Now it is time to learn some of the same lessons domestically. The Republican party won its colossal election in 1994, and is poised to advance that victory in 1996, because it burst into life as a tough-minded party of ideas and conviction. It stopped being the Stupid Party of legend, the exhausted and fearful party of the permanent minority, and became true heir to the Reagan legacy. That legacy belongs not to the Bakers and Deavers, but to the Reaganites, to those who believed in the ideas that carried the day against the Soviets and, eventually, against the welfare state. Now conservatives need to learn from Reagan's other side, the side that did know how to use the Bakers and Darmans for their competence—the one-time union boss, the negotiator, the conciliator.

They need to learn how to compromise as Reagan compromised. If they were, say, to accept Clinton's seven-year balanced budget as the best deal possible at the moment, they would still achieve a major political victory—and one that could be built on. They could sign it and insist that they would improve on it. They could say, rightly, that the government is still too large and still takes too much of the people's money, and that Clinton is at fault for that. They could spend the next few years trying to cut programs in order to find money for tax cuts. They could thus draw the appropriate distinction between the Republican party as the party of the taxpayer and the Democratic party as the party of government. They could spend time building the necessary public support for specific spending cuts. They could begin to address the moral questions raised by an intrusive and wasteful federal government.

Most of all, conservatives should learn from Ronald Reagan that they must never act as though the country is in a dire crisis requiring immediate rectification. They should understand that America is a big, lumbering, complicated place, and that if the body politic moves one step, the reverberations are enormous. A few big things a year—not everything, all at once. And not open warfare.

In the long run, then, just as Reagan caused the Soviet Union to collapse under the weight of its own wrongs and ills, so too could the Republicans cause Democratic liberalism's ultimate collapse by facing it problem by problem, calmly and consistently, and over a long period of time. And by making deals with the devil every now and then. ♦

Goals 2000: Death of a Bad Idea

By Tucker Carlson

California governor Pete Wilson recently took one of the most controversial stands of his career—and it had nothing to do with illegal aliens or affirmative action. Since last summer, Wilson has refused to accept a $42 million education grant from the federal government. Although the money has already been set aside for use in cash-strapped California schools, and comes with virtually no strings attached, Wilson has let it sit in a bank account untouched for the better part of a year. It seems likely he'll end up sending it back to Washington. Wilson's rationale: The money comes from Goals 2000, the Clinton administration's signature education reform. And, in what surely ranks as a revolutionary move for a modern politician, the governor has decided it's better to lose the funds than be seen to risk federal interference in his schools.

By Christmas, Wilson was coming under intense pressure in California to take the money. "The most important thing for people to do is to remain calm," urged Maureen DiMarco, Wilson's adviser for education matters. But hardly anybody did. Editorial writers from all over the state took to their keyboards to denounce the governor. ("Schools Starve As He Snubs Federal Education Funds," headlined the *Los Angeles Times*.) Reporters covering the fracas produced some of the least objective news coverage since the Spanish-American War. Scores of business leaders, including potentially large political contributors like the head of Hewlett-Packard, wrote letters of protest. And, of course, the teachers' unions went absolutely bananas.

Yet Wilson held firm, bolstered in his decision by parents and conservative lobbying groups across the state. One of Wilson's supporters, Steve Baldwin, a Republican assemblyman from San Diego, summarized conservative objections to Goals 2000 in a letter to the governor last year. "Increasing federal assistance is not in California's best interest," Baldwin wrote, "as it cedes even more state control of the $30 billion education system to the federal government."

Meanwhile, in a number of other states, similar controversies were breaking out over Goals 2000. Under pressure from conservatives, Republican governors and legislatures in Virginia, Alabama, Montana, and New Hampshire decided to refuse Goals 2000 grants or never even sought them.

For Goals 2000, which became law in the spring of 1994, it was a hard, fast fall. The program had begun with such high hopes. The bill's stated purpose, set out at the beginning of its 100-plus pages, offers some sense of what the Clinton administration had planned to achieve by passing it.

"By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn," it begins, and it gets more hopeful—and more intrusive—from there: "Every school in the United States will be free of drugs, violence, and the unauthorized presence of firearms and alcohol"; "the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent"; "every adult American will be literate"; "all students will be knowledgeable about the diverse cultural heritage of this Nation and about the world community"; "every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well"; "every parent in the United States will be a child's first teacher and devote time each day to helping such parent's preschool child learn"; and so sweepingly on. At one point the ostensible education bill even boasts that "the number of low-birthweight babies will be significantly reduced through enhanced prenatal health systems." Were all this actually to happen, observed the *Nation* in a lucid moment, "angels would descend from heaven and church bells would peal throughout the land, for a miracle would have occurred."

Producing miracles is a tall order for any act of Congress, but the architects of Goals 2000—a program that evolved from the Bush administration's earlier stab at education reform, America 2000—were nothing if not ambitious. In the brave new education system they imagined, government-sponsored experts would come up with "national standards" for history, math, and the arts—descriptions of what every student in the country should know before graduating from high school. States that redesigned their own curriculums to incorporate the standards, or made other government-specified attempts at education reform,

would get grants from the Department of Education. A presidentially appointed body called the National Education Standards and Improvement Council would review and approve the state efforts.

Creating national standards wasn't necessarily bad in theory—it would be nice if all American high-school students mastered basic concepts, and in fact it was the Bush Education department that initially proposed the idea. In practice, like a lot of the fine print in Goals 2000, it produced almost a parody of p.c. heavy-handedness. The much-publicized first draft of the National Standards for United States History contained 17 references to the Ku Klux Klan, for instance, while neglecting to mention Albert Einstein and the Wright brothers. (The Senate later voted 99 to 1 to reject the proposal.)

In retrospect, it's no surprise the history standards flopped. Tampering with state curriculums is beyond the traditional—and some say the constitutional—scope of the federal government. On the few occasions when Washington has sought to bring systematic Order and Progress to the nation's disparate school systems, as when Congress financed the "New Math" fiasco of the 1960s, the results have been ugly. Not to mention deeply resented by parents and school boards around the country. Goals 2000 turned out to have a predictably similar effect.

But it wasn't just slanted history that gave Goals 2000 a bad reputation. It soon became clear that the authors of Goals 2000 hoped to forward an ideological agenda as they went about reforming American education. Title IX of the bill, for example, creates a kind of federal think-tank, the Institute on the Education of At-Risk Students, whose $30 million budget would be used, among other things, to promote "gender equity" in schools and conduct "research on the development of culturally appropriate curriculum for American Indian and Alaska Native students." In response to the large and persistent gap between the scores of white and black students on standardized tests, the Institute is charged with devising easier tests—or in its own words, developing "methods of assessing the achievement of students which are sensitive to cultural differences" and "provid[ing] multiple methods of assessing student learning."

The aspects of Goals 2000 seen as perhaps most pernicious by those who fear the bill, however, have little to do with education, at least as traditionally

practiced in American schools. In the name of "ensuring improvements in school readiness and the ability of students to learn effectively," the bill encourages educators to become involved in every conceivable facet of a child's life. Section 309 of the bill tells participating states to identify "the most pressing needs facing students and their families with regard to social services, health care, nutrition, and child care." Other sections recommend bringing federally funded day care and health clinics into schools—"one-stop shopping" for government-run social services.

Title X, the last, "miscellaneous" section of the bill, is particularly heavy with stipulations that have nothing to do with reading, writing, or math. Section 1043, for example, attempts to create a federal no-smoking policy for elementary schools. Section 1018 not only calls for the creation of condom distribution programs in schools, but requires administrators to "develop procedures to encourage, to the extent possible, family participation in such programs." Section 1051, an amendment to something called the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act, concerns itself with the creation of midnight basketball leagues—preferably in neighborhoods that contain a "high incidence of persons infected with the human immunodeficiency virus or sexually transmitted diseases."

It wasn't long before criticism of Goals 2000 became deafening. Conservative Christian groups, long opposed to federal forays into education policy, mounted the loudest campaign against the program. At a news conference last June, Thomas DeWeese of the Virginia-based American Policy Foundation captured the general tone of the attacks when he described the effect of programs like Goals 2000 on schools: "The indoctrination methods . . . start in kindergarten, where students are filled with horror stories of ozone holes, dying species, homelessness and war. Yet many schools today have ceased teaching such basic skills as spelling and multiplication tables." Other evangelical organizations characterized Goals 2000 as part of a plot to take over local schools and usurp parents' authority over their children. If some of the charges seemed overheated—conservative historian Diane Ravitch called them "bizarre, almost paranoid"—they worked.

The Department of Education soon began loosening the law's requirements, granting waivers to states, essentially leaving governors free to take money from Goals 2000 without conforming to its plans for reform. As a result, says Denis Doyle, a political scientist at the Heritage Foundation who has followed Goals 2000 since its inception, "It turned out to be the least burdensome, the least intrusive federal program in memory, with nothing in the way of compliance."

But that didn't matter. In Virginia, Governor George Allen chose not to participate even though the millions his state was slated to receive could have been used for just about any education-related purpose imaginable—including, as one observer put it, "to fund a study of the invidious effects of modern education programs. And no one would have said 'no' to him." A number of local school districts around the country followed Allen's lead. In a decision that sounds almost too principled to be true, the school board in Escondido, Calif., voted not to seek a $59,000 grant earmarked for literacy efforts, citing fears of federal entanglements. In a suburb of Milwaukee, an elementary school called Wisconsin Hills turned down Goals 2000 money that would have gone "to strengthen a partnership with parents." According to one member of the school's board, "Wisconsin Hills has its own resources and if they want to take on this project, they should use their own resources."

Back in Washington, the Clinton administration watched as its most ambitious education program was rejected time and again in the states on similar grounds. In a phone call to author Ben Wattenberg, the president himself seemed to concede defeat, admitting that Goals 2000 "started out as a fine piece of work but didn't end up that way." Education secretary Richard Riley gamely mounted a defense of the program, insisting, "There is a lot of misinformation out there about Goals 2000—and that is an understatement." But to no avail. The House recently voted to zero out the meat of the funding for the law—$370 million in FY 1995—while the Senate voted to chop it by $70 million. (The versions have yet to be reconciled.)

No matter how much money the program ends up receiving, it's unlikely to accomplish much. Almost two years after the bill became law, nobody has even been appointed to its most important body, the National Education Standards and Improvement Council. Republicans have made it clear that as long as they are in power, nobody ever will be.

Goals 2000, in other words, is—at least for the moment—harmless, defanged by skeptical parents, conservative activists, and Republican politicians. "In point of fact," says Denis Doyle, with some satisfaction, "it's been perfectly innocuous. It's really what it could have been that's scary." ♦

When Liberals Get Tough

By Andrew Peyton Thomas

In a crime-beleaguered age that cries out for both tougher crime control and greater personal responsibility, the new book by New York Judge Harold J. Rothwax carries a title that is sure to be greeted with public approval—*Guilty: The Collapse of Criminal Justice* (Random House, 238 pages, $22). Finally, or so it would seem, a judge with important credentials on the left is prepared to assign blame for the erosion of Americans' most important right, personal security, over the last 30 years. Before his elevation to the bench, Rothwax was the senior trial attorney for the Criminal Defense Division of the Legal Aid Society. He was also, the publisher informs us, "a card-carrying member of the ACLU"—indeed, a vice chairman of the New York Civil Liberties Union. The reader is encouraged to learn that, despite these affiliations, this New York City judge takes pride in imposing stiff punishments and criticizes many of the Warren court decisions that have made his job of dispensing justice so unmanageable.

But while this repudiation of 30 years' worth of judicially minted criminals' rights—and presumably of the ACLU leaders and others responsible for this upheaval—has all the makings of an important confession of wrongdoing by someone present at the creation, this promise of literary justice served proves illusory. A reader searching for such an acknowledgement or explicit sign of remorse will be as disappointed as Rothwax tells us he is upon peering into the blank faces of today's hardened criminals.

The book is a forthright, slender manifesto that lacks footnotes and is written in an easy, first-person style that may earn it a wide audience from a public frustrated and impatient with America's malfunctioning criminal justice system. This is very good news, because a mass reading of this book may well place enough pressure on policymakers to overcome the current opposition to meaningful reform.

THIS REPUDIATION OF 30 YEARS' WORTH OF JUDICIALLY MINTED CRIMINALS' RIGHTS HAS ALL THE MAKINGS OF AN IMPORTANT CONFESSION.

The book proceeds in steady, sequential fashion to assess the various constitutional amendments in the Bill of Rights that have been judicially altered to frustrate the nation's ability to punish criminals. Judge Rothwax recalls that "only thirty-five years ago, our criminal justice system was relatively simple: A person was arrested, indicted, and tried. But life in the courts is no longer that simple." Things have grown much more complicated because the Supreme Court has imposed unworkable and dangerous requirements on policemen and prosecutors. To prove his point, Rothwax centers the narrative on a parade of horribles—a recounting of outrageous court decisions ranging from *Miranda* v. *Arizona* to less known cases in which defendants clearly guilty of heinous crimes went free because of baffling rulings.

The "major culprit in the malaise-ridden judicial system," the judge believes, is the way the courts interpret the Fourth Amendment. Courts have converted the amendment's prohibition against unreasonable searches and seizures into the so-called exclusionary rule. This rule excludes evidence from criminal trials obtained in violation of the Fourth Amendment. Rothwax observes that the exclusionary rule has no basis in the Fourth Amendment itself, but is merely a recently invented gimmick designed to give the amendment teeth. The rule has now multiplied to the point that in New York state, 20 to 30 exclusionary rules limit the admissibility of incriminating evidence. The result, Rothwax bluntly warns, is that the exclusionary rule liberates "people who are clearly criminals."

Rothwax hands down a similarly harsh indictment of the *Miranda* decision, whose rules have become ingrained in the public consciousness through three decades of TV cop shows in which the words "You have the right to remain silent" are as oft-spoken as "Freeze!" Rothwax explains that the Warren court "manipulated" the *Miranda* case to change the Fifth Amendment's right against self-incrimination into a separate requirement: that policemen inform suspects of this Fifth Amendment right before

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questioning them, and in elaborate and unprecedented detail. The police's failure to give this warning requires courts to suppress any confession subsequently received, no matter how voluntary. In stunning language, Judge Rothwax calls the *Miranda* decision "folly—a terrible decision atop many other terrible decisions."

THE SIMPLE, COMMON-LAW RULES AGAINST TORTURE AND COERCED CONFESSIONS SUFFICE TO BAR SUCH EVIDENCE.

The judge's most comprehensive rebuke to the legal system comes in his questioning of the role of truth in the criminal justice process, as well as the role of lawyers generally. He notes that in America, "the law is not necessarily a search for the truth. Indeed, it is often *not* a search for the truth." He admits, "I sometimes feel as if I am the centerpiece in a gladiator ring. Theatrics, not truth, is the guiding principle. Strength is the ultimate test."

Such statements are a radical critique of our system of justice, and they ring true. As for the lawyers who work within this system, they are often a self-centered bunch devoted to exploiting the system for personal gain or for promoting an extreme vision of rights. "My law school students," he adds wryly, "are quick to mock the Ten Commandments—or at least some of them—but the first ten Amendments to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, is holy writ and not to be questioned or critically examined."

One of the high points of the book is the judge's tale of how Peter Neufeld, one of O.J. Simpson's attorneys, sought a postponement in a case pending before Rothwax so that he could pursue the Simpson matter. Neufeld gave his word "as a man of honor" that he would not seek another continuance, pleading that his "fame and fortune rely on Simpson." When, however, Neufeld eventually reneged on his pledge, a furious Rothwax chided him publicly for his prevarications and self-service. The judge also lambastes the Simpson defense team for a "contemptuous" strategy of inciting racial animosities to obtain an acquittal. He finds the evidence of Simpson's guilt overwhelming.

The book concludes with a list of proposals justifiably billed as "common sense" reforms of the system. These include: "abandoning" *Miranda*, limiting peremptory challenges, requiring less-than-unanimous jury verdicts, and allowing American judges a "more active role in the courtroom."

Yet given the judge's sweeping condemnation of so much of the criminal justice system, the reader has good reason to wonder why more thoroughgoing reforms are not suggested. Indeed, there is seemingly no better time than the present for offering such reforms, as the widespread disgust with the Simpson trial and with intractably high crime rates has dramatically heightened public awareness of these problems.

Regrettably, the changes urged by the judge are not the sort of dramatic reforms that would correspond to his earlier, radical critiques of the criminal justice system. For instance, that "major culprit" behind the collapse of the system, the exclusionary rule, comes in for relatively light sentencing at the judge's hands. Few recent judicial complexities will put a police officer in a foul mood faster than this rule, and Rothwax is right in saying that the rule has been a major obstacle to consistent justice in America. Curiously, however, Rothwax does not argue for the simple repeal of the rule. Its repeal would merely restore the Fourth Amendment regime that preceded the 1961 Supreme Court decision in *Mapp* v.

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Ohio, a regime that worked far better than the current one. America is the only nation in the world that follows the exclusionary rule, save for the Philippines, which still bears that vestige of Yankee colonialism. The rule could be abolished with few ill effects, and policemen could be punished individually for their actions.

But Rothwax argues instead for making the test one of "reasonableness." Courts, he says, should "determine whether the search and seizure is reasonable by considering all relevant factors on a case-by-case basis." The word "reasonable," of course, is one of those classic lawyerisms that are inherently indeterminate and likely to spawn a dozen new cases for every one they resolve. Such a rule is subject to the same inconsistent application that Rothwax rightly decries in regard to the current exclusionary rule. And given the courts' recent history of misapplying the law to effect the release of offenders, this court-centered inquiry could easily result in more of the same.

Elsewhere, Rothwax's solutions seem similarly tentative and far short of what is required to reverse the system's admitted collapse. He bravely calls for the repeal of *Miranda* but says nothing about the continuing need for the underlying right against self-incrimination. *Miranda*, of course, did not create this right; it merely required policemen to publicize it. This right once made sense when subjects were being tortured at the behest of a king, the environment in which the Fifth Amendment was drafted. However, the simple, common-law rules against torture and coerced confessions suffice to bar such evidence from trial and to lessen our present-day loyalty to this antiquated right.

Likewise, Rothwax notes the harmful effects of the attorney-client privilege, but does not question its validity. This privilege, too, is widely misunderstood and without solid justification. The privilege was once held by the attorney rather than the client because members of the bar in the 17th century wished to avoid the unseemly business of testifying in court. Now it has become another criminals' right that benefits lawyers but has no constitutional basis and no social value.

The judge's critique of the court system as a whole falls prey to the same hesitancy. He envies the judge-centered legal systems of Europe, which greatly limit the power of lawyers and thus guarantee greater equality among the litigants. But he knows better than to take on the bar by questioning America's lawyer-dependent adversary system, even though this system is increasingly an economic and moral drain on our society. He criticizes plea bargaining and its providing of a "discount" of lesser punishment to criminals. But he also calls it, oddly, both "inescapable" and escapable—that is, escapable only if we are willing to fund our courts more generously and to make them run more efficiently. In a crime-beset nation that can support annual federal budgets of more than $1 trillion, surely enough money can be found to honor a defendant's right to a jury trial and prevent plea bargaining's open mockery of our judicial system. The judge nevertheless seems resigned to the present arrangement and nowhere calls for the abolition of this practice.

In these and other, related shortcomings can be found the central flaw in Rothwax's reflections. To be more bold, to propose the kind of dramatic reforms necessary to eliminate the problems hobbling the system, Rothwax would have to relinquish his credentials as a socially accepted member of the bar and former leader of the ACLU. Altogether absent from this book is any frank admission that his former associates in the civil liberties bar were terribly wrong for avidly pursuing these court rulings and for stimulating the self-centered, litigious popular culture that has ensued. In short, nowhere does he tell us who is truly "guilty."

His discussion of the Warren court is most instructive in this regard. The judge takes issue with the Warren court for its "activist" techniques, describing its personnel as "willful men with an agenda." Most remarkably, in his discussion of *Mapp* v. *Ohio*, Rothwax notes that the Fourth Amendment issue was never even discussed by the lower-court judges who considered the case.

The issue arose, he admits, only in a small point at the end of a Supreme Court brief filed by the ACLU. This was the same ACLU in which, judging from his biography, Rothwax was a leader at the time. But the ACLU never comes in for any criticism.

In the final analysis, Rothwax does not have the genuine courage of his convictions. In *Guilty*, he proves a splendid diagnostician of the failures of liberal criminal justice—but when it comes to naming causes, and suggesting cures, he is less physician than politician. He's too busy biting his tongue to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. ♦

> JUDGE ROTHWAX SEEMS RESIGNED TO THE PRESENT LEGAL ARRANGEMENTS AND NOWHERE CALLS FOR THE ABOLITION OF LAWYERS' ABUSES.

Books

Defaming the Last Thousand Years

By David Frum

A hundred and fifty years ago, James Mill, the father of John Stuart Mill, published an immense history of India, a country he'd never visited and whose languages he did not speak. Mill intended to expose to his readers the ignorance and backwardness of Indian culture; what he exposed instead was the narrowness and arrogance of his own mind. Ironically enough, Mill's work is still read—not as a sourcebook on India, for on that subject it is and was nearly useless, but as a frightening manifestation of the rigidity of the Utilitarian philosophical tradition from which it sprang.

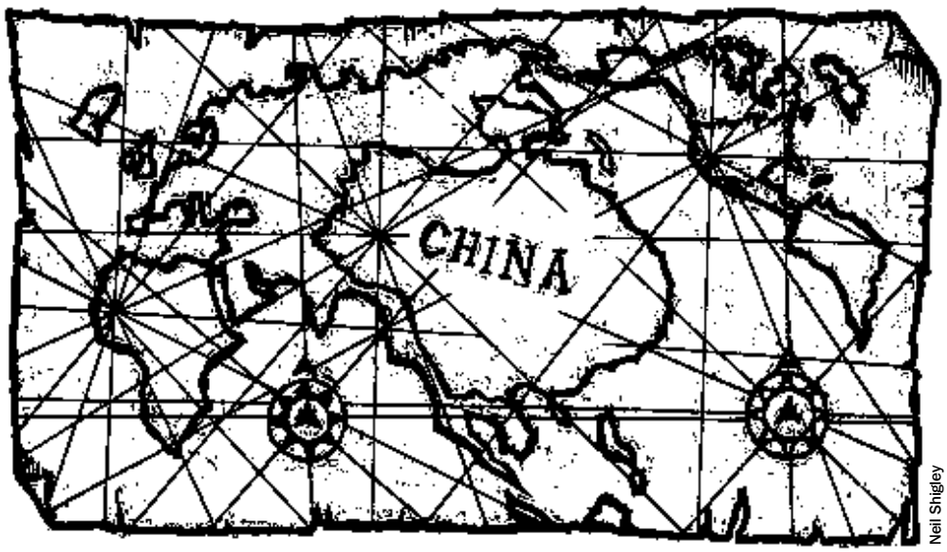
This fall, Oxford professor Felipe Fernandez-Armesto published to enthusiastic reviews in England a huge new history of the world that is interesting in exactly the same way James Mill's book was. In just 816 pages, Fernandez-Armesto manages to display virtually every one of the prejudices and vices that have done so much to degrade the teaching of the humanities in our universities. Anyone in search of a solid one-volume summary of the planet's history would do well to take his Christmas gift copy of *Millennium: A History of Our Last Thousand Years* (Scribner, $35) to a good used-book store and swap it for a copy of William H. McNeill's *Rise of the West* or Hugh Thomas's *An Unfinished History of the World*. But if you want to see the modern academic mind in all its self-congratulatory self-hatred, no book offers a more complete picture than *Millennium*.

Fernandez-Armesto's ambition, frankly confessed, is to write history that humbles what he regards as the arrogance of the West, history that "rehabilitate[s] the overlooked, including places often ignored as peripheral, peoples marginalized as inferior and individuals relegated to bit-parts and footnotes." *Millennium* consistently dismisses the constitutional, economic, intellectual, and moral achievements of Europe and America. It insists instead on the importance of developments in Asia and Africa that have been slighted (the author believes) until now. In the future, Fernandez-Armesto predicts, "events commonly invested with world-shattering importance—such as the English and American Civil Wars, the European 'Wars of Religion,' the French and Russian Revolutions—will look parochial. As the trends of our millennium are reassessed and the picture modified by the chance survivals and suppressions of evidence, encounters at Runnymede and Canossa will be eclipsed by hitherto undervalued happenings in Makassar or Timbuktu."

> FERNANDEZ-ARNESTO DISPLAYS VIRTUALLY EVERY ONE OF THE PREJUDICES THAT HAVE DEGRADED THE TEACHING OF THE HUMANITIES.

One has to wonder whether even Fernandez-Armesto himself can possibly believe that last sentence. The "encounter" at Runnymede—the extraction of the Magna Carta from King John—was the first stumbling step toward limiting power by law: The constitutions that govern modern liberal regimes from Buenos Aires to Tokyo still use phrases that first issued from scribes in the service of the feudal barons of England. The histories of Timbuktu and Makassar may well be fascinating, but it's hard to imagine that a man who purports in his final chapter to be frightened by the prospect of a revival of fascism in the developed world—as portended by the election of Rudy Giuliani as mayor of New York (I'm not kidding)—can genuinely find them more important than the rude birth of the rule of law.

At first glance, *Millennium* appears to be quite an old-fashioned history, which recounts the rise and fall of empires and the clash of nations and civilizations. What makes it novel—or at least utterly different from the old "rise of the West" school of historiography—is that Fernandez-Armesto is frankly cheering for the other side. If there is any one lesson that the author wants to teach, it is this: Until the Industrial Revolution, Western Europe was an insignificant and backward corner of the world. Its so-called achievements—the building of cathedrals, the Renaissance, parliamentary government—paled in comparison with those of Africa and Asia. Even Europe's pre-industrial colonial accomplishments were beggarly affairs, in which luck and the Europeans' local allies should be seen as playing the decisive roles. "For the Indians of Tlaxcala," Fernandez-Armesto observes of the conquest of Mexico, "who supplied the vital native levies that enabled Cortes to overawe other potential allies, it was a Tlaxcalan victory over Tenochtitlan, in which some others, including the Spaniards, played



Neil Shigley

an ancillary role." Anyway, "the achievements of Cortes and Columbus were eclipsed by their Turkish contemporaries."

True, Fernandez-Armesto concedes, the years 1850 to 1950 were a bit different: In that century, Europe and European settlers did pull ahead of other civilizations to create a world hegemony. But this ascendancy has proven mercifully brief. Already Europe and America are being eclipsed by China and Japan. "Today the supremacy of Western science looks increasingly like a short interval in a long history. . . . The sun has come up again on the other side of the world and the cultural imperialism of the present and the future emanates from the depths of Asia and—increasingly and decisively, I believe—from the shores of the Pacific."

Nor is the West merely being overtaken. It is being colonized from within, as Asians populate Australia, New Zealand, and western Canada. California, too, Fernandez-Armesto speculates, may likely soon split off from the rest of the United States to join some Chinese-dominated Pacific Commonwealth. As for the rest of the U.S., it is "becoming the most conspicuous arena of counter-colonization at the start of the new millennium, owing in part to the mental revolution that has extended a frontier of African awareness across the hemisphere, and in part by the demographic revolution represented by the Hispanic diaspora. This is a movement of counter-colonization in the fullest sense: a repeopling of territories wrested by aggressors pursuing their 'manifest destiny,' a reversal profoundly similar to the peaceful counter-invasion of European countries by their empires' victim-peoples."

> DESPITE HIS GENUFLECTION AT THE ALTAR OF THIRD WORLD MARTYRDOM, IT IS POWER THAT THE AUTHOR REALLY WORSHIPS.

That term "victim-peoples" is potentially misleading. Fernandez-Armesto is not one to weep for the losers of history: His book contains just two glancing references to the Holocaust of European Jewry, and the first of them is written in such a way as to suggest that it was a crime committed by the French. The single reference to the victims of the Gulag is even vaguer and more cryptic. The evil of the trans-Atlantic slave trade naturally moves him much more, but one detects a certain "can't make an omelette without breaking eggs" spirit even there. For despite Fernandez-Armesto's formulaic genuflections at the altar of Third World martyrdom, it isn't really victimization that he cares about, but power. Like the English Stalinists diagnosed by George Orwell, Fernandez-Armesto is a power-worshipper. It is because he believes that power is ebbing from his own civilization that he disparages it, and it is because he imagines that power is accumulating in the East that he celebrates the cultures of Asia. In the long run, he concludes, our millennium will be seen as "continuous with the last and the next: characterized, say, by brief challenges from Islam and the West to an otherwise almost continuous history of Chinese preponderance."

The evidence for this last claim is odd, including as it does "the modification of scales of values under Buddhist and Hindu influences and under the impact of increasingly popular martial disciplines and sports from the East. Oriental taste, long established in the West in the context of the decorative arts, is increasingly flavoring the food and selectively shaping the major arts in most western countries."

The prediction that China will soon wake to dominate the world is a familiar one. Conceivably, the prediction might actually someday prove true. Rather than itemizing the reasons for the unlikelihood that this will happen anytime soon,

however, let's take a lesson from the professor himself. "The course of history," he says in his introduction, "is influenced less by events as they happen than by the constructions—often fanciful, often false—which people put on them. . . . I have tried consistently to ask myself not, 'Why did this or that change happen?' but 'Why did people convince themselves of the reality of this or that alleged change?'" So let's join him. Let's try to understand why Fernandez-Armesto believes what he does and writes as he has.

Jorge Luis Borges could put together a short story out of the pivotal people and things startlingly scanted by Fernandez-Armesto's history. Virtually none of the great champions of human liberty engages his attention. John Locke is omitted, as are Immanuel Kant and James Madison. Science and technology, or at least Western science and technology, scarcely get a mention. James Watt, Louis Pasteur, Alexander Graham Bell, Otto Benz, the Wright brothers, antibiotics and anesthetics, the American landing on the moon: All omitted.

Religion gets slightly more attention, but even so, you'll look in vain for the names of John Calvin, St. Bernard, Maimonides. Although *Millennium* is lavishly illustrated, Fernandez-Armesto himself confesses that he could find no room in his story for "the achievement of Goethe, say, or—rather more to my regret—of Mozart or Michelangelo." (Elvis Presley, however, merits two pages and a photograph.) Fernandez-Armesto makes no room for the development of the parliamentary institutions exported by the English to the rest of the world: the English Civil War, the Revolution of 1688, the emergence of traditions of freedom of religion, speech, and the press, or the great Reform Bills that created a working liberal democracy. Even the American Revolution—a difficult thing to overlook—is disparaged.

Freedom, democracy, mass prosperity, scientific discoveries—the things that have made this millennium the most remarkable in all of our history as a species, and that have made the past three or four centuries the most remarkable of all—impress Fernandez-Armesto not a bit. What matters is mass. Conquerors count; scientists don't.

JORGE LUIS BORGES COULD PUT TOGETHER A SHORT STORY OUT OF THE PIVOTAL PEOPLE STARTLINGLY SCANTED BY THE OXFORD PROFESSOR.

No wonder, then, that the future seems to Fernandez-Armesto to belong to the Orient. Others might notice that postimperial Asia and Africa are more completely shaped by Western ideas and ideals than ever before; that they participate in a world economic and diplomatic system defined by Western rules and ultimately backed by Western power; that Western languages dominate international communication; that even those non-Westerners most intent on rejecting the West (the mullahs of Iran, the communists in Beijing) are helplessly trapped within Western intellectual paradigms. But Fernandez-Armesto cannot notice these things. To do so would require him to weigh such imponderables as principles and rules and words as in some sense equivalent to the teeming bodies of Jakarta and Shanghai. Nor would he want to notice them: for they would spoil the cackling pleasure he feels in the perceived displacement of his civilization by more ruthless antagonists.

Millennium, in short, could not more perfectly reflect the assumptions and convictions of our contemporary intellectual life. In the most depressing sense, it is truly a book for our time. ♦

Books

Reason's Champion

By Mary Sydney Leach

Disagreement is not a very easy thing to reach," observed John Courtney Murray. The act of disagreeing with a philosophical adversary requires an almost heroic selflessness, a willingness to dissect your own world view to its very essence; after all, honest and genuine disagreement can only occur when the parties agree on common terms of discourse and first principles. This is the task that Philip E. Johnson has set for himself—and challenged his adversaries to take up—in his remarkable *Reason in the Balance: The Case Against Naturalism in Science, Law and Education* (Inter-Varsity Press, 245 pages, $18).

Johnson, a professor of law at Berkeley, wants nothing less than to initiate a serious and civil debate about the validity and consequences of naturalism, the doctrine that nothing exists beyond nature

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itself. This "permanently closed system of material causes and effects" has become our culture's prevailing assumption, and the source of true knowledge and rationality.

Johnson believes open debate is the only means to expose naturalism for what it is: not the authentic view of reality but, in fact, the "established religious philosophy" of the country. Johnson wants to create a civil debate about our cultural assumptions in order to reintroduce the language of religion into the public square. The proper place to start, he says, is with the story of creation itself. "Every culture must have a creation story as a basis for things like philosophy, education and law," he writes. "If we want to know how we ought to lead our lives and relate to our fellow creatures, the place to begin is with knowledge about how and why we came into existence. When there is radical disagreement in a commonwealth about the creation story, the stage is set for intense conflict."

Kevin Chadwick

The highly relativistic "creation story" of naturalism—a Darwinian havoc of random mutations, natural selection, and impersonal laws—strips life of any higher purpose. And once a culture's first principles are divested of meaning in this way, we are condemned to live by a philosophy subject to constant cultural and ethical revision. Worse yet, since naturalism effectively excludes the possibility of any pre-existing higher intelligence, it is a tautology—an argument that assumes its own conclusion. And that is not acceptable, says Johnson, for a doctrine that not only pretends to intellectual coherence but assumes the posture of telling citizens "how things really are."

Within the moral universe of naturalism, there is simply no room for God. Either naturalism possesses sufficient power to support the assertion that life is merely cause and effect, or it does not. As Johnson proves, empirical evidence simply does not support this deeply unsatisfying idea. That means naturalism is not science, but philosophy—a secular religion.

Johnson's effort to open debate on this subject is a profound challenge, because the academic and legal elite are reluctant to render their views vulnerable to competition and scrutiny. To suggest that what science cannot explain, the incidence of intelligent design might be able to, would "imply the existence of something supernatural, which is forever outside the knowledge and control of science."

Johnson wants intellectuals, both naturalist and religious, to come together in pursuit of truth: "If Christian theists can summon the courage to argue that preexisting intelligence really was an essential element in biological creation and to insist that the evidence be evaluated by standards that do not assume the point in dispute, then they will make a great contribution to the search for truth, whatever the outcome." He is clearly convinced that once the the public square finds space for the idea that the universe exists by intelligent design—by the grace of God—it would prove so compelling an alternative to implicit naturalist arguments that those arguments would lose their primacy. Johnson says he wants the larger culture to acknowledge a belief system besides naturalism, but he really wants more. Like any true believer, he knows *his* belief system is the right one. Those who argue for debate seek one not only to find the truth, but to persuade others to their view. But if the debate between naturalism and theism is honestly undertaken, how *do* we decide which system is better? By judging the consequences of each? To an honest naturalist, that might be acceptable, but to a committed believer in God, it is too utilitarian.

Johnson maintains that naturalists do not so much disavow natural law—the bedrock of his ideas about morality and justice—as they redefine it: "Even the nihilistic position that morality is an illusion and law should therefore concern itself solely with utility is a statement about 'how things really are' and therefore a proposition of natural law." In particular, the commitment to

abortion rights reveals such an absolutist view: "the right to abortion is founded on natural law doctrines, however confused: asserted facts about the human condition that human lawmakers must not overrule."

Indeed, though Johnson does not say so, the abortion debate itself is precisely the kind of discussion he advocates; there is an implicit agreement between pro-lifers and pro-choicers that our public life and institutions are based on values. Then we reach the critical juncture at which these values are in conflict, when we must decide which ones are *better*. And this is where the culture war begins. Johnson may place too much stock in "reason." In the abortion debate, the two sides are perfectly aware that the other side has a coherent set of ideas. And that only makes the debate all the more heated, all the more intractable.

When Johnson talks about American "cultural assumptions," he is usually referring to ideas that have been imposed on ordinary Americans by elites. That is understandable, considering his position as a religious conservative working on the Berkeley campus. But if naturalism were as insidiously dominating as Johnson claims, there would be no cultural conflict over abortion. In this sense, Johnson concedes too much to the elite culture he criticizes. Ordinary citizens have proved time and again that they possess reserves of judgment and discernment to expose and reject that philosophy.

Reason in the Balance is a serious and original challenge to the secularist orthodoxy that still dominates the public square. Johnson's case in support of intelligent design—that, to paraphrase him, we *seem* designed for a purpose because we *were*—is credibly and comprehensively presented, and his ease with the scientific arguments of naturalism is particularly impressive.

And precisely because he speaks from the hotbed of secularism itself and has standing in that community, Johnson is well suited to begin this vital discussion. In fact, with the publication of *Reason in the Balance*, he might even help to restore one of the imperatives of civil public debate: respect for the adversary. ♦

Television

The Left Loses a Pal

By Evan Gahr

When Phil Donahue called a halt to his show the other week after nearly 29 years, he was almost universally lauded as the elder statesman of television talk. The man who pioneered the confessional talk-show almost three decades ago—where guests willingly exhibited every imaginable emotion and behavior, except a sense of shame, and the only sin was being judgmental—could not keep up with the indignities his younger competitors had imposed on the form. Donahue had, according to the Associated Press, "struggled" to take the "high road" even as other talk shows grew increasingly sleazy. Thus did a man who once did a show in drag find himself strangely recast as a force for good, a wholesome influence on a corrupt medium.

The idea is, in truth, absurd. *Donahue* is the program that inaugurated television's daytime parade of the tawdry, freakish, and bizarre. The idea that television viewers found his recent shows about "open season on husbands' private parts" and "a couple looking for a third mate" too bland and therefore defected to racier programs like *Ricki Lake* or *Charles Perez* is comical. What happened, in brief, is that he lost his New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles outlets at the very same time that the confessional talk-show form began to die. A massive shakeout in the daytime talk-show game may mean that by the end of 1996, only Oprah Winfrey, Ricki Lake, Montel Williams, and Jenny Jones will be left. This may seem like an inordinate number of programs, but in the past few years there have been almost two dozen others: Gabrielle, Charles, Mark, Carnie, Bertice, Leeza, Rolonda, Les, Dennis, Tempestt, Maury, Lauren, Jane, Jane (yes, two Janes), and other first names too tiresome to recall.

Donahue's friends are not shedding tears over his departure because he showed more restraint when he interviewed transvestite hookers. Rather, they are mourning the loss of an ideological soulmate. Donahue's departure means that the left is losing the best friend it has ever had on American television.

Ricki Lake may join PETA for a highly destructive anti-fur protest at ratings sweeps time—as she did in November 1994—but for Donahue, left-wing politics was a regular event. Whether he was rallying for feminism, offering Carl Sagan and Ralph Nader a regular soapbox, or turning the airwaves over to

Evan Gahr, a New York Post *editorial writer, contributed "Be Casual or Else" to last week's issue of* The Weekly Standard.

Soviet officials frantically engaged in moral equivalence, Donahue was a relentless promoter of noxious ideas.

Donahue approached politics the way he did his guests on the show: Everybody just needed to understand one another better. There was no such thing as moral differences, just a lack of communication. Consider his 1987 take on U.S.-Soviet relations: "It's ironic we should be so far apart today when only 40 years ago we were partners against a common enemy and we succeeded together to help virtue be the winner. Now we don't know each other."

Donahue *understands* almost everything. He *understands* that in New York City's slums poverty produces "feelings of failure and frustration" that cause violence. He has even ventured to *understand* why feminists are accused of lacking a sense of humor.

In his quest for understanding, Donahue occasionally would try to look just like his guests. For a show on baldness he made himself bald. For a show on transvestites he wore a skirt, for a show on nerds he went as a nerd, for a show on pregnancy he wore a stomach extender. With his taste for instant sensitivity, Donahue helped pioneer the concept of the sensitive man in the 1970s. Before him, a "sensitive man" meant a guy who cut himself shaving easily; suddenly it was someone who *understood* women.

Of course, some things Donahue just can't understand. Religious people escape his understanding. Donahue has always seemed to consider his Catholic upbringing in Cleveland the original sin for which he must endlessly atone. Of his childhood as an altar boy and observant Catholic, he told a magazine interviewer, "You simply can't come out of that experience without traces of sexism on your soul." And in his 1979 autobiography, he wrote that "the Church is not irrelevant, it is destructive. It is unnecessarily destructive."

Thirteen years later, he continued to wage holy war against its teachings. The "Church's treatment of divorced and remarried Catholics is . . . un-Christian and absurd," said Phil the moral theologian. "I will continue to speak out against these features of Catholic orthodoxy which are not divinely inspired."

Bill Garner

Strong stuff. But then again, Donahue had no problem taking sides. When Oliver North was his guest in 1991, Donahue opined that the 1986 bombing of Libya made us "look like terrorists ourselves," and said of North's assistance to the Nicaraguan contras, "If we don't have the guts to declare war, you don't have the right to be . . . holding slide presentations for the old, wealthy women to give you money to fight Commies."

Not that Donahue had anything against communists. Some of his best friends were communists. In 1991, he and his pal Vladimir Pozner—the American-born former Soviet mouthpiece who excused totalitarian repression and tyranny with a Brooklyn accent—teamed up for their own talk show on CNBC. *Pozner and Donahue*, which recently went off the air, was fine just as long as you weren't looking for ideological diversity. When Posner decried the erosion of rights in the United States, claiming that not much had changed since the 1857 *Dred Scott* case, he didn't get an argument from Donahue.

Perhaps some minor changes since *Dred Scott* —the Emancipation Proclamation, Reconstruction, the 1964 Civil Rights Act—escaped Donahue's memory. Donahue chimed in with his own list of infringements of civil liberties, including the 1986 Supreme Court decision that upheld Georgia's sodomy law.

Donahue's politics were also much in evidence in 1994 when he unsuccessfully sought permission to televise the execution of a North Carolina man. He no doubt wanted to dramatize the cruelty of capital punishment and score a huge ratings bonanza. (Who says you can't do well and do good?)

When Donahue quit, Michael Stern, co-author of *The Encyclopedia of Pop Culture*, told *USA Today,* "He's a polite and civilized gentleman. Such a person has no place on network television or big syndicated TV." Actually, with Donahue off the air, the only people likely to be left out in the cold are those who need their daily leftist fix. Doubtless, Phil *understands* their pain. ♦

Last week John F. Kennedy Jr., editor in chief of *George*, fired editor Eric Etheridge after just three issues. "We had basic creative differences that made it necessary," Kennedy said.

— News Item

Parody

George

not just politics as usual

CO-FOUNDERS
EDITOR IN CHIEF John F. Kennedy Jr. EXECUTIVE PUBLISHER Michael J. Berman
EDITOR [redacted]
MANAGING EDITOR Helen Mantle
SENIOR EDITORS Richard Blow, Gary L. Gerdey, Elizabeth Mitchell

Memo to: Eric Etheridge

From: John Kennedy

Re: Editorial changes

Eric, as I have expressed to you on numerous occasions, I have been unhappy with the editorial direction you have been taking the magazine in. I'll be blunt: George has been getting too serious. Last night, Daryl tried to slog her way through the article on how both Democrats and Republicans love "Baywatch." Finally she threw the magazine down in disgust. "If I want to read a doctoral thesis," she said, "I'll go to grad school."

Of course, she'd have to finish high school first, but she's got a point. Daryl is just the kind of reader George wants to reach: hip, young, blonde, amazing teeth. Yet to her — and to me, frankly — the magazine reads like one long bar exam. Take the recent profile of Richard Armey. I'm sure it was a good article. But I specifically said I wanted the photo to be a full-body shot, in bicycle pants. Eric, where's the follow through? Just yesterday, Uncle Teddy told me you never got back to him about his "Barbara Boxer Au Naturelle" idea. And what about "Congress meets 'Friends,'" with Enid Waldholtz in a Rachel haircut? (Believe me, we're doing her a favor. If there's one chick who needs a makeover, it's her.)

The recent reader survey shows we need more creativity in matching writers and topics. When you hear "cutbacks in child nutrition programs," you probably think: Jonathan Kozol. Our readers think: Kate Moss. We had "Rush Limbaugh: If I Were President." Our readers want "Anna Nicole Smith: If I Was Chairman of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board." They want to see Kevin Sessums on Barney Frank (so does Kevin!). Whitney Houston: "The Voting Rights Act of 1965 Turns 21." Alicia Silverstone's post-modern take on the Bureau of Labor Statistics. I'm just riffing now — this is top-of-my-head stuff. But it shows the direction our readers are telling us we need to go.

You leave me with no choice. I must hereby request your resignation forthwith. If you want to discuss this further, I'll have some free time after I finish my interview with Pamela Anderson. (Turns out she's a big supporter of the FLAT tax. The irony!)

JFK

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