

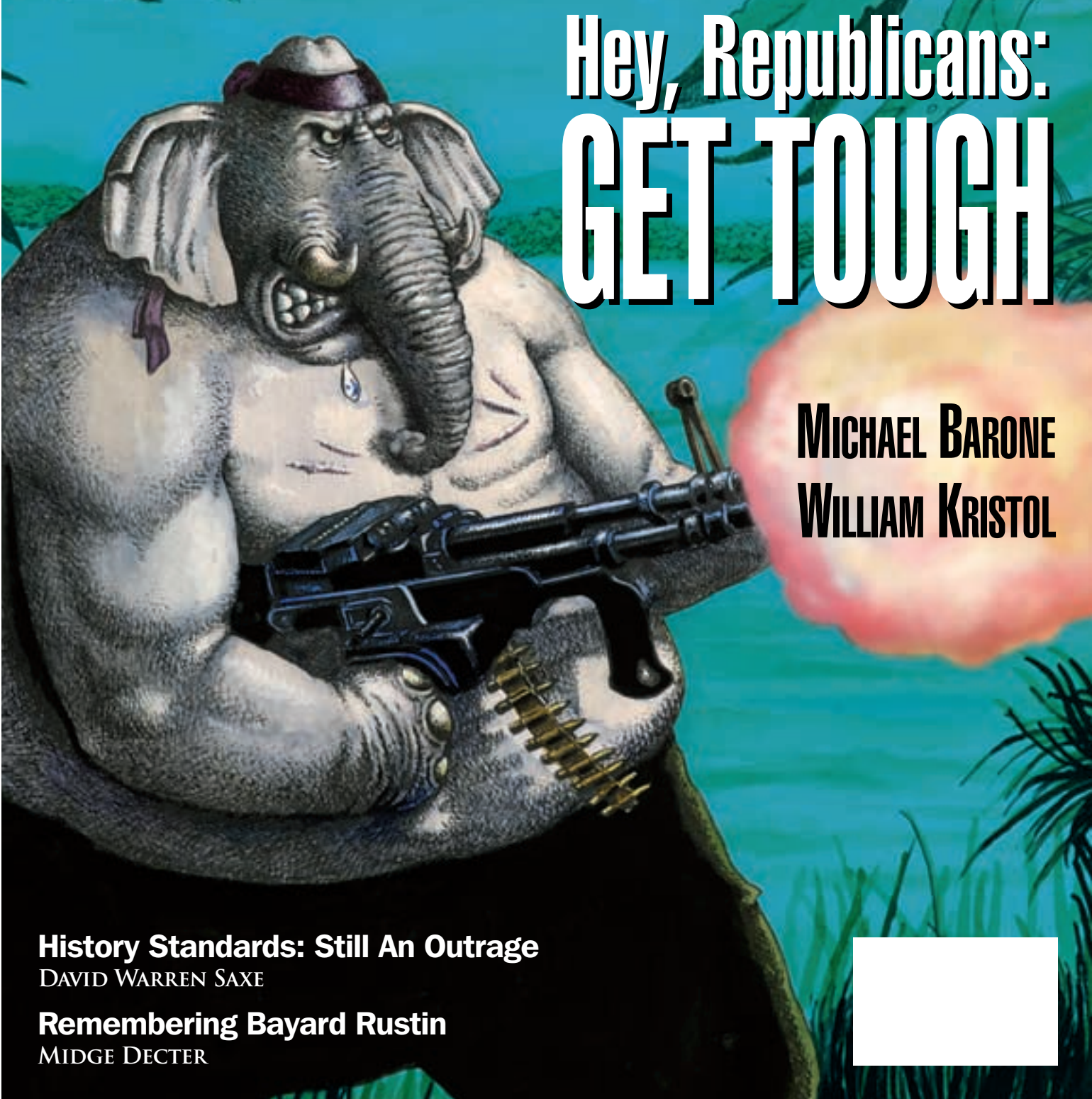
**FOLLOW
CLINTON'S
MONEY**
FRED BARNES BRIT HUME
THE EDITORS

the weekly

Standard

MARCH 10, 1997

\$2.95



Hey, Republicans:
GET TOUGH

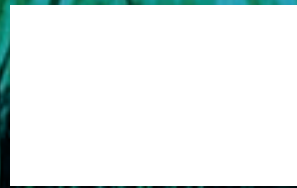
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WILLIAM KRISTOL**

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A NEW GOP RALLYING CRY—WE'RE AVERAGE!

Majority leader Dick Arme y's Feb. 26 memo to his fellow House Republicans starts with the words, "Many of you appear disappointed," and reading what follows it's easy to understand why. Has there ever been a more dispiriting call to arms?

First Arme y lectures his more exuberant colleagues: "Drama is not the purpose of the Congress. . . . This year is very different from last year. . . . Making progress on the Republican agenda doesn't require us to create fireworks." Next he explains what making progress on that agenda does require. Legislating, maybe? Nope. Been there, done that. Now that "we have settled in as the majority party . . . we have to engage the American people in a broad debate over the role of government in our lives."

Some voters, it occurs to us,

might think that congressmen, when they're not too busy "settling in," should engage *each other* in broad debate over the role of government, but that would be second-wave thinking. No, "restoring individual freedom will depend on a broad communications effort that must begin this year," which sounds like code for lots of focus groups and advertising. And for those members who had hoped to spend, say, six or nine months in Washington before gearing up full-time for the '98 elections, no such luck: "I intend to push every member and every committee to work inside and outside the Congress to make sure that the American public knows what we are doing. . . . Never again should we enter a major debate without the plan and resources to drive our message"—i.e., let's all go raise some more money to pay the

focus-group consultants and ad writers (the one group in the Republican party, by the way, that has good reason to be cheered by the Arme y memo).

Finally, after a desultory exposition of the "agenda" that will be communicated—"This Spring, Bill Goodling will bring the Family Flexibility Act to the floor so that parents can have more time with their children . . . Tom Bliley will streamline the Superfund program, so that money goes to cleaning up toxic dirt. . . . Sonny Bono is working on a bill that will limit judicial activism." The memo concludes on this ringing note: "I know some members are frustrated at the slow start. But this year is setting the same pace as the average Congress following a Presidential election." That's certainly good news. No reason to be frustrated.

son to be frustrated.

FROM THE ICKES FILES

It'll take weeks for reporters fully to plumb the depths of Harold Ickes's newly released—but still heavily "redacted" (i.e., censored)—fund-raising correspondence. But a couple of items already stand out. First there's the R. Warren Meddoff controversy. Meddoff, you'll recall, is the man who approached President Clinton at a fund-raiser in late October with news that a friend of his, one William R. Morgan, had \$5 million to give to the Democratic party—provided he could get a tax deduction for it. Ickes called Meddoff the next day to follow up and told him it was doable. Ickes next faxed Meddoff the bank-account numbers of the Democratic National Committee and several non-profit organizations working to turn out Democratic votes—and asked him to ask Morgan to pony up.

The story was always that Ickes & Co. got cold feet about this deal and dropped it almost immediately. Good thing, too, since solicitations from government property using government-owned telephones and fax machines are illegal. But it turns out there's a memo written by Ickes

dated Nov. 19, two weeks after the election, in which Ickes requests further research on Meddoff and his wealthy friend. Seems they were still pursuing the \$5 million, illegal or not.

Another Ickes-file oddity: Though the legal defense fund established to help defray Bill and Hillary Clinton's Whitewater attorney's fees may not by charter accept contributions from labor unions, a June 3, 1996, memo by Ickes indicates they found a way around this inconvenience. According to Ickes, Gerald McEntee of the government-employees union AFSCME had recently urged his individual members to help the Clintons out. Ickes reports that the members are complying with McEntee's request.

Finally, something not in Ickes's files, but related to the White House coffee scandal they involve. Invited to a June 17, 1996, White House coffee, as reported by *The Hill* newspaper: Dr. George "The Killer" Tiller of Wichita, Kansas—the nation's most prominent late-term abortionist.

Proof that the president knows who his friends are.

Scrapbook



counsel whose work will be private—and limited to the Clinton administration.

LET CHAN VISIT

Retired Democratic senator Paul Simon writes in Pete du Pont's webzine *Intellectual Capital* that Lien Chan, the vice president of Taiwan, "is being denied the right to enter the United States to attend meetings of the governing board of the University of Chicago," from which the vice president graduated some years back. "Has he committed some criminal act to prevent him from visiting the United States?" Simon asks. No, Lien Chan just hails from the wrong China, the one that has democratic elections. A Taiwanese official told Simon that there is "a quiet understanding" with the State Department that Taiwan will not insist on a visa "to save the United States the embarrassment of turning him down." Proving once again that there's no liberal Democrat like a retired one, Simon memorably takes aim at Clinton administration policy: "To announce that we will welcome China's president and dictator when he comes (and I do not oppose that) but treat Taiwanese officials who are freely elected in a less generous way sends a message to the world that the United States stands for freedom and democracy—unless it offends a neighborhood bully."

THE FLEETING THOMPSON MOMENT

The only Republican not grinning about the White House fund-raising scandal is Fred Thompson. Only a couple of weeks ago it looked like the Tennessee senator's hearings investigating the Clinton administration's fund-raising practices would provide him a priceless platform from which to launch a presidential bid. In very short order, though, Thompson started to alienate his GOP colleagues, who were put off both by his freewheeling style and by signals that he might widen the scope of the hearings to include Republican fund-raising. Then Trent Lott, the Senate majority leader, said, not so offhandedly, that were an independent counsel named, the Thompson committee would be significantly scaled back, if not eliminated. Thompson thinks the committee should be preserved regardless. That's already become a minority view among Senate Republicans, many of whom now believe that, while they'll miss the opportunity to publicly embarrass the White House in televised hearings, they will be better served by having an independent

YOU CAN READ THIS LATER . . .

This is not a joke. At Harvard University an organization called the Bureau of Study Counsel has formed a support group for students who procrastinate. "Through discussion and practical exercises," the bureau declares, "we will work on understanding the experience of procrastination and on being free to use our creative process in moments when we feel resistant, blocked or paralyzed."

It is almost breathtaking to see the concrete categories of everyday life melt away into nothingness. Being late on a paper is not a failing, it is an "experience." Homework is not work, it's a "creative process." And notice particularly the use of the word "we" in the phrase, "when we feel resistant, blocked or paralyzed." It is not an individual who may feel these things, it is a vague and collective we, to which no personal responsibility could possibly attach.

As for when the Procrastination Group will meet, or how soon it will start its business, write your own jokes.

Casual

WHO IS ROBERT BARTLEY?

Robert Bartley has edited the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page for 25 years, and I bet that in all that time he has never held a single traditional editorial meeting. Instead, at various points during the day the editorial writers will hear Bartley's gleeful cackle coming from the office of deputy editor Dan Henninger, and one by one they will amble over and sit down.

Henninger's area is a big open space with soft low chairs that make it impossible to sit with dignity. Dorothy Rabinowitz sinks into one in a fierce, sardonic slouch. George Melloan, the veteran *Global View* columnist, achieves a position almost perfectly horizontal, his feet outstretched, his head tilting back. John Fund is only partially visible under the overflow of faxes that have come to him from the far corners of the conservative empire. Bartley's favorite spot is an upright chair in the middle, his body twisted around and his hair tousled.

These and another half-dozen or so writers and editors will be sitting there, talking about this or that, and suddenly the dreaded event will occur. There will be a lull in the conversation, a silence. A silence that lasts and lasts. A silence that is perfectly fine with Bartley, who grew up in the slow rhythms of the rural Midwest. He's a quiet man, after all.

But for a New Yorker like me, trained to fill every silence with jabber, the quiet stretches were nerve-racking social catastrophes. During the nearly nine years I worked on Bartley's staff, I used to stare furiously at my shoes during the interludes, repeating this mantra to myself: "I will not break this silence. . . ." Sometimes a silence can last so long that it becomes impregnable.

Last week, the *Journal* held a dinner party celebrating Bartley's quarter-century as editorial-page editor. Seth Lipsky, now the publisher of the *Forward*, held up a worn sheet of paper—the one piece of feedback he'd received during his 12 years under Bartley. It was a xerox of a short editorial Seth had written, and on it, Bartley had scrawled, with characteristic loquacity, "Good." Paul Gigot mentioned Bob's job-interviewing style, which is unique in that he often doesn't ask any questions.

During the many speeches that evening, people tried to figure out how someone so reticent could have had such vast influence on the people around him and been so revered by his staff. He rarely gives orders to his subordinates, or even guidance, but the page nonetheless reflects his personality. Henninger put his finger on the nub of it: In dealing with Bartley, you don't listen, you play Luke Skywalker. You feel The Force.

It's true. You may be away in a satellite office in Brussels or Hong Kong, working on the paper's European or Asian edition, and therefore may not have spoken to Bartley in six months, but still you feel the consistency of his views and the rhythms of his unmatched news judgment.

The one time you do hear from Bartley is when you are in trouble, when some target of yours has threatened to sue, or when some government official or government—Singapore, China, Belgium—has gone ballistic over something you wrote. Then, Bartley comes to your support with one goal: to get you in even deeper. When someone attacks an editorial you wrote, Bartley will insist on hitting back twice as hard. If someone issues blustery libel threats, you can be sure that Bartley will make them even angrier before he's

finished with them.

Indeed, the Bartley mystery no one will ever explain is how someone could spend a lifetime within the Establishment and yet remain so daring in taking it on. More than any other journalist, Bartley takes risks, staking out audacious positions, and launching wildly unconventional attacks. Yet he doesn't slip into complete wackismo.

The dinner exemplified Bartley's position halfway in and halfway out of the Establishment. Many of those in attendance were respectable luminaries: Henry Kissinger, Paul Volcker, Donald Rumsfeld. Yet there were folks from Bartley's bombthrower side, as became clear when Jude Wanniski rose up to read from his Internet postings. (It's easy to forget how weird supply-side ideas seemed when Bartley hopped on board in the 1970s.)

But if Hollywood were to base a sitcom on the *Journal* editorial page, Bartley would not be the main character. It would be Dan Henninger, the beloved calm center in the midst of a swirl of eccentrics. Henninger is the underappreciated secret of Bartley's success. He now does more of the actual writing, and regularly edits the page. He's the one who shepherds the staff through the day, endures the long gatherings around his desk, and connects the idiosyncratic concerns of the page to the concerns of ordinary *Journal* readers.

And watching these two, it's clear that Bartley appreciates Henninger's contribution. When it comes time for Dan to get his 25-year dinner, Robert Bartley will rise to the podium, adjust his glasses, and sum it all up thusly:

"

!"

DAVID BROOKS

CHINA: THE LETTERS

Your China issue (Feb. 24) was more terrifying than anything that Tom Clancy could conjure up in his wildest dreams. The Clinton administration is giving away the store with its present “engagement” policy. This policy, when viewed against the backdrop of “klatschgate” replete with illegal Asian campaign contributions and Chinese arms dealers at the White House, paints a truly depressing picture. The Chinese are ideologically committed long-term thinkers who have no doubt pegged America as a paper tiger. With the People’s Liberation Army firmly in command, one of these days the Chinese are going to call our bluff on Taiwan. Then what will we do? Clearly a conventional ground war against China is a non-starter, and are we willing to risk a thermonuclear conflagration over Taiwan? I think not, and I believe the Chinese may be willing to take that bet.

ARTHUR M. SHATZ
BAYSIDE, NY

In your recent China issue you overlooked the most flagrant example of China’s non-qualification as a “civilized” nation: its continuing occupation and butchery of Tibet. China occupied Tibet in 1950, so the coming millennium celebrations will also, knowingly or not, celebrate half a century of Chinese occupation.

During that time, the Chinese have imprisoned, tortured, and murdered thousands of Tibetans. As long as China continues to occupy Tibet, it has no claim to the status of a civilized nation. And it is outrageous that President Clinton—whose every news release proclaims him a humanitarian—is willing to ignore Tibet’s plight as he sucks up to the butchers.

DANIELLE THORDERSEN
LOS ANGELES, CA

As stated eloquently by congressmen Christopher Cox and Chris Smith, the Clinton administration has reversed its 1992 position toward China from human-rights activist to unabated apologist. The hypocrisy inherent in changing ideals for political purposes troubles today’s young Americans.

What’s worse, China could be to

Generation Xers what the Soviet Union was to Baby Boomers. The way America reversed the threat of the Soviet Union was not to coddle, but to counter with the strength of our ideals backed by the convictions of our military. China, a country which has threatened Los Angeles with nuclear annihilation, should not be treated lightly by our government. If we do not deal strongly with China, today’s young voters will be the ones to live with the consequences.

The “youth vote” is roundly assumed to be a preponderantly liberal group, lackadaisical on foreign-policy issues and more interested in advancing whatever self-interested social cause of the day. Yet the reality, as proven by groups such as the America’s Future



Foundation, is that young people are interested in the world around them. They want to provide for the security and defense of the United States. This means countering China’s current and future threat with strong diplomacy and a robust military.

ANNE SMITH
WASHINGTON, DC

On the international scene, China is the sole significant power currently increasing its defense spending. It has exported nuclear technology and weaponry to “rogue” countries such as Iran and Iraq, violating international agreements. And, as Aaron Friedberg (“Broken Engagement”) reminds us, Chinese officials have not-so-subtly threatened America by suggesting that

Americans “care more about Los Angeles than about Taipei.”

As the editors assert, it is possible that Secretary of State Albright and the administration will be offered a human-rights “gift” soon. But we must not be content with a mere token of reform. Deng Xiaoping’s death marks the passing of an era in China; we should mark this change by adopting a policy that is more resolute in demanding political liberalization along with economic reforms. And we must not forget one thing: Even if, according to Deng, to be rich is glorious, China’s dissidents show that many Chinese feel it is no substitute for being free.

ALEXANDER T. STILLMAN
WASHINGTON, DC

Congratulations on your China issue. It was a spectacular accomplishment and may provoke much thought among our national leaders. I spent eighteen months in China during World War II and passed a considerable amount of time in the back country. As a result, I have great faith in the fine character of the Chinese people. A symposium on the people of China would be as interesting as your symposium on the issue of China. Such attention to the people would provide a better understanding of them, their culture, and their perception of the Western world.

JIM BEARDSLEY
HENDERSONVILLE, NC

OUR DAY WITH LEE

My one encounter with Lee Atwater cannot redeem him after the attacks in Jessica Gavora’s article “Who Hears a Horton?” (Feb. 24), but it does reveal another side of him. I came to Washington, D.C., at age 16 during inauguration week 1989. Uninspired by the day’s itinerary set by my program, three of us decided to sneak into the Republican National Committee’s winter meeting.

We heard Lee Atwater’s speech and lent our voices to the chorus that elected him chairman of the RNC. Afterwards, in the hallway, we asked Mr. Atwater to pose for a photo with us. He not only stopped for the picture, he spoke with us for several minutes and asked whether we planned to hear

Correspondence

George Bush and Dan Quayle speak at the luncheon. We explained that we were not supposed to be there, but Atwater insisted we should stay and made sure we had tickets before going on his way. Atwater took the time to talk with and do a favor for three kids who could not do him any good. Perhaps it sounds like a small gesture, but it was certainly not the gesture of a completely self-centered man.

I think that Atwater genuinely cared about George Bush and believed in electing him at all costs—which is not the same as a belief in winning at all costs. Loyalty separates Lee Atwater from the kind of unscrupulous Dick Morris hack who merely enjoys the game. Yet Atwater knew how to win and was not afraid of telling the truth. If he had been around in 1992 and 1996, the Bush and Dole campaigns would have sounded a lot more like Ross Perot's Election Eve commercial last fall: hard-hitting, honest, and relevant. Atwater was the kind of scrapper who did not stick to the Queensberry Rules when the other guy started hitting below the belt, but he was no mercenary. His political actions were mostly out of service to his party, and not himself.

MARK CHENOWETH
CHICAGO, IL

TAKE THE HEAT OFF NEWT

For the second week in a row you have found reasons to trash Newt Gingrich in the Scrapbook by deliberately distorting the thrust of his statements. The "notion that Gingrich's critics objected to Jackson only because he's black" is not implicit in his statement, "I'm courting every American of any background" ("Newt Goes A-Courtin'," Feb. 17). Jackson's background is that he is a left-winger, but it is still possible to find some common ground.

Then in "Guess Who Came to Connerly's Dinner?" (Feb. 24), you compound the error by saying that he is a hypocrite if he opposes reverse discrimination but does not make ending it his top priority.

If it weren't for Newt Gingrich we would be living in a "social democracy" now and your magazine would have about 500 subscribers. Instead of seeking divisive quotes from Republicans,

why don't you dig into felonies committed by liberals?

T.A. DOUGHERTY
PAWCATUCK, CT

THERE GO THE SCHOOLS

Regarding "Weakly Standards" (Scrapbook, Feb. 24): Educators, like myself, who understand the value of memorizing the names of the conquistadors, Latin declensions, and the basics of biology, have been desperately looking for a good meaty spot to attack the proposed national standards for education.

Just when it all seemed hopeless, along came Clinton's words in Annapolis, as you reported them. The words bear repeating: "Keep in mind, we don't want Johnny to make a better score than Mary on this test. And then when a lot of them don't, we don't want to give them an F; we want to give them a hand up. We want to say we haven't done what we should and we're going to do this."

This country faces a gloomy picture when it comes to education. National standards can lead to testing, which can lead to control of curriculum in every local school district in the country. We have the example of the seriously flawed Goals 2000 history standards that omitted reference to any historical figure without an axe to grind. Then there are the brand new state standards, foaming with obscurity, proposed by the Deweyistas running education in Illinois: "Demonstrating a knowledge and sense of numbers and their representations, including basic operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division), ratios and proportions, by using multiple ways of obtaining exact values and estimates to understand patterns involving numbers and their applications." No, too scary.

EVA SOROCK
WILMETTE, IL

GET PAST THE ENNUI

Fred Barnes (Casual, Feb. 24) should be able to find all the tension he needs to write effectively about the socialism creeping into our country. President Clinton is not so steeped in ennui that he is not able to further his

agenda quietly, bypass Congress, and create entitlements by fiat.

If Clinton's maneuvering does not put the fear of God in us, what will? Shall we drift toward total government control of our lives without a single cry from our Fred Barneses, who are too bored to bother?

DORINE MILLAR
FORT LAUDERDALE, FL

EYES ON THE PRIZE

David Brooks is right on the money ("Seduce the Seducer," Feb. 3). "If the Republicans hand Bill Clinton political victories, he will hand them policy victories." Since the bottom line is correcting the dangerous policy direction of the last 30 years, we must seize the opportunity we now have.

The Democrats saw their chance after Watergate and enacted legislation (albeit political and self-serving) that enabled them to become more entrenched. It is in our own short- and long-term interest to seize the initiative now and enact our agenda. If we help Clinton go down in history by doing the right thing, principle will have dictated it, else we are as bad as those we accuse of only seeking power. Who cares if Bill Clinton gets brownie points from the public? Our goal is more substantive and more important—a better country for ourselves and our children.

We cannot, however, impatiently demand that history take place today rather than evolve. We will get the generation of dominance we really need in order to undo all of the liberalism of the last three decades.

ROGER AUSTIN
GAINESVILLE, FL

THE WEEKLY STANDARD

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THE LINCOLN BEDROOM CAPER

During his first term in office, Bill Clinton raised an astonishing amount of campaign cash—nearly \$40 million—with a program of Map Room coffees and Lincoln Bedroom sleepovers for major Democratic donors. Perhaps it bothers you that the president routinely and systematically used the hypnotizing thrill of White House access to snap open rich people's checkbooks. His aides are eager to put your mind at ease. That's not what happened, they insist.

The White House counsel's office now helpfully distributes a xeroxed newsclipping in which Clinton buddy Garry Mauro, the state land commissioner of Texas, is quoted about a coffee he helped organize last August. "We specifically did not make the White House event a fund-raiser," Mauro says. "Every single person who went to the White House had already given the money."

What, then? Private meetings with the president were "merely" an after-the-fact reward for high-dollar contributions, the invitations having been sold, according to numerous unrebutted newspaper accounts, at an explicit price? No, no, no, no, no, administration spokespeople avow; that's not what happened, either. The coffees and overnights came first, reports Clinton press secretary Mike McCurry. Only later would the Democratic National Committee "approach those who attended to see if they had been motivated to give more funds or to, in some cases, get a response after a presentation by the president."

We're back to our original suspicion, in that case. Bill Clinton wasn't the product; he was the salesman. Or he was a bit of both; it's hard to tell. And it doesn't really matter, Clinton's spinners argue. No one has yet been charged with directly asking a guest for money on White House property—which would have been illegal. So the president's open-house routine, Mike McCurry advises the media, cannot accurately be called fund-raising. "Technically" speaking.

But *only* technically. The 500-plus pages of fund-raising documents delivered under threat of subpoena to congressional investigators by former Clinton

deputy chief of staff Harold Ickes—and preemptively released by the White House last week—make abundantly clear that the Democratic party has spent four years transforming the executive mansion into a VIP lounge for its wealthiest benefactors. At the president's direction, and with the president's constant cooperation.

Ickes's handwritten notes from a May 1994 meeting with Clinton included reference to "BC questions about our lack of fund-raising" and indicated that "BC will have breakfast to raise \$." In dozens of memoranda faxed back and forth between the DNC and the West Wing over the next few years, various White House activities—receptions, lunches, movie viewings, and donor "servicing dinners" starring Clinton, Gore, and both men's wives—were repeatedly identified as "fund-raising events" or "fund-raising dates" or "fund-raisers" or elements of a "fund-raising plan." Clinton personally approved DNC direct-mail fund-raising appeals, even those he did not sign himself. Clinton personally approved a January 5, 1995, DNC finance-division proposal that he host White House "breakfast, lunch or coffee dates" designed to "energize our key people."

It was on the back of that memo—and in that context, no other—that the president wrote out his wish for the coffee program to be pursued "promptly" and for a complete list of possible invitees "at 100,000 or more" and "50,000 or more." On the same page, Clinton wrote that he was "ready to start overnights right away." A blizzard of White House scheduling requests for coffee invitations to "top fund-raisers from across the country" began showing up in Ickes's files almost immediately thereafter. By January 1996, Clinton deputy chief of staff Evelyn Lieberman advised Ickes and Leon Panetta that "critical" fund-raising requirements might force staff time with the president to be "truncated or eliminated" in favor of on-site donor coffees.

Not illegal maybe, but gross beyond dispute—and beyond serious comparison with any White House political initiative ever before undertaken in our histo-

ry. It is not true that, as Beltway wisdom infected by Perotista outrage insists, “everybody does it.” Nobody did *this* before, no matter what the president’s aides say. Of course, they know that only a handful of Americans will have the patience necessary to reach that conclusion independently by wading through the entire Ickes documentary library. So they are ready with their own summary characterizations of the evidence.

It is the DNC’s fault, Mike McCurry intimates, since “how they raise the money off these events or how they went off to solicit people who were there, that’s really their business and they should more appropriately address it.”

It is everyone’s fault, the president himself suggests: “Anyone who is involved in politics must accept responsibility for this problem and take responsibility to repair it.”

The most preposterously robotic spin of all comes from the preposterously robotic Ann Lewis, White House deputy director of communications. The cof-

ees and overnights are no one’s fault, she says. They are *good* things—proof that the president and Mrs. Clinton enjoyed “spending time with their friends” and people who “weren’t friends yet.” Without such visits, it would be “frighteningly easy for a president to get isolated.”

Lewis makes this astounding pronouncement with a perfectly straight face, looking for all the world like a normal human being who’s telling the truth. And therein lies the most depressing and least soluble aspect of this latest—but certainly not last—scandal surrounding Bill Clinton. Faced with an embarrassing revelation, he and his colleagues have a single, instinctive, and overriding impulse. They lie about it.

There is no law that Congress might pass to ban mendacity in the White House. There is no reason to expect that this administration might change its spots these next four years. We’re probably stuck with the Clinton crowd as they are. The year 2001 cannot come soon enough.

—David Tell, for the Editors

SHOW ME THE MONEY

by Brit Hume

IN EARLY 1996, PRESIDENT CLINTON’S top political advisers had a problem. Under Dick Morris’s guidance, Clinton had made an extraordinary comeback from the mid-term debacle of 1994. While the Republican presidential candidates were beating (and spending) each other senseless in the primaries, Clinton was coasting to renomination without challenge, and his poll ratings had recovered and were still rising. He was well on his way to raising all the money he could legally spend in the pre-convention period. To outward appearances, things could hardly have been better.

The problem for Clinton’s aides was they had an increasingly unhappy candidate on their hands. The Morris strategy was built around a massive television ad blitz that was costing a fortune. It had started in the summer of 1995 with commercials attacking the Republican positions on crime and the budget, and Morris planned to keep it going until the end of the campaign. The ads were blanketing much of the country with Washington and New York deliberately blacked out to keep the national media from figuring out what Morris was up to.

Before it was over, the ad campaign would cost about \$85 million, more than twice the TV budget of

the 1992 Clinton campaign. As a result, the president was having to devote night after night to fund-raising and was continually on the road in pursuit of cash. For all his gregariousness, Clinton hated these fund-raisers. They were all the same: He arrived, stood in a receiving line having his picture taken with the donors, made a speech, and left. Usually, they were the last events at the end of long days of campaigning. Often the fund-raising, not the campaigning, was the real reason for the trip. “You’ve got me running all around the country and all I do is run in and out of hotel rooms,” one aide reports the president complained. “I’m not having any contact with any of these people. All I’m doing is sitting there shaking hands.”

In his book *Behind the Oval Office*, Morris quotes an even more bitter Clinton lament: “You don’t know, you don’t have any remote idea how hard I have to work. . . . I can’t think. I can’t act. I can’t do anything but go to fund-raisers and shake hands. You want me to issue executive orders; I can’t focus on a thing except the next fund-raiser.” But Morris was not about to accommodate his weary client. In his view, the ad campaign was indispensable. Indeed, he now argues that the money that paid for it, in effect, bought Clinton reelection. “If it were not for the fund-raising that they did,” he told me, “we would not have won the election, and Dole and Gingrich would be running the country.”

Every president, no matter how unpopular with the wider public, is a fund-raising superstar in his own party. The only limits to what a president can raise are those imposed by law and his own endurance. The Clinton team had worried earlier about the monetary limits. Morris had even suggested at one point that the Clinton campaign refuse federal matching money and thereby avoid the spending limits such money entails. But the president's aides were already worried that the Morris ad budget, even with matching funds, might exhaust all the campaign money available, leaving other Democratic candidates starved for cash and furious. Morris's idea was quickly rejected.

Morris had used Clinton-Gore campaign funds—so-called hard money—to purchase the first round of ads, a \$2.5 million buy devoted to the crime issue, in July 1995. What Morris did not recognize until later was that such “issue-advocacy” ads could be paid for by “soft” money available in unrestricted amounts to the two parties for “party-building” activities. Once he realized that, he made the Democratic National Committee treasury, in effect, a part of the Clinton-Gore war chest. Still, somebody had to raise the dollars, and Clinton was the only person capable of doing so in the amounts required.

This was how the now-infamous White House coffees became institutionalized. The president, first lady, and Tipper Gore had each hosted occasional coffees with various groups, usually in the Map Room in the White House basement. These events the president did like. He would arrive, typically about 8:30 a.m., to find a small group composed of potential donors, DNC officials, and others. He would speak briefly and then take questions. It was a perfect forum for Clinton, who likes to talk and likes to listen. They were also an ideal fund-raising vehicle, even if no overt solicitation was done until afterward. “Once the word got out that he

was happy to do these,” an aide recalls, “the fund-raising folks said, ‘Let’s pump this up.’” They pumped it up all right. By recent count, the White House held 103 coffees, most of them for cash, in 1995 and 1996. It was at one such coffee that the president met Wang Jun, the Chinese arms merchant, who had come with Charlie Trie, the man who rounded up the \$649,000 in fishy donations to Clinton’s legal defense fund that were subsequently returned.

At one point in early 1996, political aides urged that 27 coffees be added to a Clinton schedule that already included 13 dinners and 11 days of travel over a three-month period. The request is cited in a memorandum from deputy chief of staff Evelyn Lieberman, who said it had “considerable urgency.” She proposed granting the request for a provisional two-week period to see how it affected things, including the president’s “stamina.” “In order to do this,” her memo adds, “staff who routinely brief the President will be asked to be flexible during this period and accept that their briefings may be considerably truncated or eliminated.” That request presumably included the president’s daily intelligence briefing, though White House aides insist that briefing was never affected by the demands of fund-raising.

In his book, Dick Morris claims to have understood those demands. He describes attending a Clinton fund-raiser and standing, as the president had to, while the long line of contributors filed by for their moment with him. “The line never seemed to ease up, much less end. The president,” he writes, “went through this agony night after night. I began to see what those ads were going to cost him.” Oh, no, he didn’t.

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CLINTON’S CRITICAL MASS

by Fred Barnes

THE DEFINING POLITICAL EVENT of 1997 was supposed to be a budget deal between President Clinton and congressional Republicans. It won’t be. In the last two weeks of February, the Clinton scandals finally achieved critical mass and became the dominant story in Washington. The media frenzy over Clinton’s use of the Lincoln Bedroom as a campaign fund-raising tool was merely the most visible reflection of the shift as the machinery of Washington

lumbered into motion.

A grand jury began examining illegal foreign donations to aid Clinton’s reelection. Kenneth Starr, the Whitewater independent counsel, agreed to stick with his investigation to the end. The clamor for another special prosecutor to probe Democratic fund-raising intensified. Congressional committees swung into action. All in all, Washington experienced an attitude adjustment. The scandals, previously viewed as not mattering much, are now seen as threatening to Clinton.

For Clinton, there are ominous signs his position may be unraveling. Most alarming for the White

House was the decision of Harold Ickes, dumped as Clinton's deputy chief of staff, to hand incriminating campaign documents over to a House committee. The papers showed the president's heavy involvement in using the Lincoln Bedroom and White House coffees for campaign fund-raising. Ickes, a Clinton friend for 25 years, didn't consult the White House before reaching agreement with the committee. He said he wasn't seeking revenge, but he doesn't want to be the fall guy in the fund-raising scandal either. Earlier, he had been fingered as the culprit in a scheme, never carried out, to make a large campaign donation to Clinton tax-exempt. As if to warn the White House against steering blame toward him again, Ickes told the *Washington Post* he has more documents he could make public.

Another portentous sign, familiar from earlier scandals, is the existence of wiretaps made by "federal agencies." These have uncovered evidence, according to the *Washington Post*, that the Chinese embassy in Washington may have channeled money illegally to Clinton and the Democratic party (and perhaps to members of Congress). This revelation gives the fund-raising scandal a national-security aspect. And it also was bound to grab the attention of White House and Democratic officials. The result: They must be all the more careful to say nothing to investigators that could be undermined by evidence from wiretapped conversations.

Still another bad sign for Clinton is the invoking of the Fifth Amendment by John Huang and Webb Hubbell. Charles Trie and Pauline Kanchanalak have instructed their lawyers not to accept subpoenas. This means either they've got something to hide from congressional committees and federal investigators, or they're negotiating immunity for their testimony.

Among the first to recognize the shift was Mike McCurry, the White House press secretary. Despite a high public approval rating, the president can no longer control the story line in Washington, McCurry has discovered. "You can get in one of those periods when you can't get anything through the clutter," he says. "We're in that now, but I don't know for how long." George Stephanopoulos, the just-departed Clinton aide who remains in almost daily contact with the White House, says the fund-raising scandal alone "is going to be a lot of trouble over this year for the president."

That's putting it mildly. Stephanopoulos, by the way, free as a bird and making lots of money, is the envy of anxious White House aides he left behind. McCurry may be the next to leave. Asked if he's staying on, he says, "For the time being. If I resign now, I'll look like I'm leaving in the face of scandal." True.

But he and others have to deal with the denials and excuses they have trotted out in recent months. Last

August, Amy Weiss Tobe, the spokeswoman for the Democratic National Committee, sneered at the charge that her party had arranged White House overnights for big donors. That "has become an urban myth, like the alligators in the sewers of New York," she declared. The White House insisted then that Clinton had had little to do with organizing the coffees with donors or the overnight stays. All that, of course, turned out to be false.

The White House has done one thing right and one wrong in defending the president. It's a smart move to keep Clinton out front, answering questions and trying to defuse controversy. It probably won't help much, but it's better than being hunkered down, looking guilty. The wrong step is the line taken in briefings and on TV by Ann Lewis, the deputy White House communications director. The folks who stayed overnight in the Lincoln Bedroom "were all personal friends," she told reporters on February 25. "The vast majority were friends." In a few cases, there were invitees with whom the president and first lady "weren't friends yet," but the Clintons wanted them to be.

So far as I know, this line has found no takers in the press. Even Dick Morris, once Clinton's top political adviser, doesn't buy it. He joked on a New York radio station that the president would "auction off a place in his own bedroom [and] sleep on the floor if somebody gave him a million." Morris, however, thinks the fund-raising matter will blow over, if only because there's a legislative solution in the form of campaign-finance reform. Clinton has fund-raised "perhaps more crassly" than other presidents, but nothing more. So scandal fever will pass, he thinks.

I think not. There are too many separate scandals, some barely explored yet. The *Los Angeles Times* reported the Clintons sent messages to Webb Hubbell, convicted of fraud and tax evasion, through White House aide Marsha Scott. There's also the matter of the administration's decision to change its policy on Guam following big campaign donations (I'm not kidding about this). There's the Paula Jones sexual harassment case, which the Supreme Court will rule on soon. And this spring, congressional hearings are expected on the White House database known as "Big Brother," with Scott called to testify. I could go on.

Congressional Republicans have slowly awakened to what Clinton's trouble means for them. "It's very likely," a senior Republican says, that "the world will be a different place a month from now." As the scandals play out, Clinton will become weaker. He'll have less leverage in dealings with Republicans. His demands will be easier to ignore. He may not have the press on his side, as he did in 1995 and 1996.

So the Republican strategy is, as one Senate aide put it, "to slow-walk reality." The terms of any accords

with Clinton are likely to be more favorable for Republicans later rather than sooner. House speaker Newt Gingrich was quoted as telling Republicans privately, "Relax. We've got time. Just let things unfold." In truth, this was already the strategy of Republicans,

given their lack of a compelling agenda. Now, they're even less likely to move.

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UCLA'S LOYALTY OATH

by Michael W. Lynch

CALIFORNIANS LIKE TO BE in the forefront of things, and they have lately been particularly daring about affirmative action: In July 1995, the University of California regents voted to end race-based admissions and hiring on their campuses; last November, the state's electorate approved the historic California Civil Rights Initiative, striking a further blow for equal opportunity. But that doesn't mean that every Californian is playing ball; at the University of California, Los Angeles, those wishing to be tutors must take a loyalty oath—to affirmative action.

Alvaro Cardona learned this the hard way. Last November, he applied for a \$12.43-an-hour tutoring job in the university's Academic Advancement Program (AAP). He was turned down because he wouldn't sign on to AAP's official endorsement of race-based affirmative action.

By objective measures, Cardona would seem a perfect fit for the job: He is an honors student with two years' tutoring experience at another college. He is also an immigrant of humble origins, which would seem to conform to AAP's professed mission of serving "historically under-represented students," in part by providing tutors who can "serve as role models." A 30-year-old with three children, Cardona has enough life experience to set an example for the 18-to-20-year-olds he would be tutoring. But during his job interview for a position as a writing tutor, he wasn't asked a single question related to English composition. Nor did his interviewer simulate a tutorial session, something AAP claims is standard procedure for all interviews. Instead, she used the half-hour to ask him such questions as, "How do you feel about affirmative action," and, "Do you believe there is institutionalized racism at UCLA?"

Cardona, who aspires to teach at a community college, was honest, answering that he hadn't experienced racism at UCLA and that affirmative action, "while it does help a lot of people, can be carried too far, bearing people on its shoulders rather than giving them an elbow on which to steady themselves." Says Cardona,

"I was being candid about my political beliefs. I didn't think that they would have repercussions for my job."

But they did. Cardona was told that he didn't get the job because he "couldn't understand the needs of AAP students." The woman who delivered the news told him that he would be the kind of person who stresses academics, which is only 50 percent of the job. The other 50 percent? Validating students' feelings.

It is illegal, incidentally, for employers to query job applicants about their political views. Although UCLA's legal-services department told Cardona he had an actionable case on First Amendment grounds, the school did not offer help. The American Civil Liberties Union turned him down, too, mailing a form letter that cited insufficient resources.

Cardona's experience is not unique. Most of those who seek to become tutors know that they must repeat the party line on affirmative action. AAP's director, Adolfo Bermeo, denies it, but the word on the street is otherwise. Grad student Brandon Lu said to the *Daily Bruin*, the school's paper, "I was flat-out told by an AAP tutor to say I was in favor of affirmative action or they wouldn't hire me. Everyone going in knew to say this. I'm just wondering what this question has to do with tutoring students."

Bermeo (who did not return phone calls for this article) defends his program's emphasis on affirmative action because, as he told the *Daily Bruin*, "employees need to really believe that people who are here belong here. That's a pedagogical issue, but not a litmus test." But why should tutoring and a belief in colorblind decisionmaking be mutually exclusive? And why can't "diversity"—academia's golden calf—cover Alvaro Cardona, whose background and classically liberal views undoubtedly enrich the life of that community?

It is time for University of California regents to clean house. Programs such as AAP should be reconstituted—opened up, made reasonable, released from the grip of the ideologues—or shut down. Then California could lead the way once again.

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TIME FOR AN INSURRECTION

By William Kristol

In Washington today, we are witness to two depressing spectacles. We see a morally bankrupt Clinton White House, brazenly renting the Lincoln Bedroom. And we see a brain-dead Republican party, cowering in the halls of Congress.

There is nothing that can be done to change the first of these: Bill Clinton is who he is, after all. But the phenomenon of Republican timidity is unnatural and unnecessary. It can be changed. What's needed is an insurrection—one, two, many insurrections—from within the ranks of the GOP.

Every significant rightward shift in modern American politics has followed from an insurrectionary assault on the Republican establishment. Ronald Reagan's 1976 primary challenge, animated by his rejection of the policy of détente, laid the groundwork for his triumph in 1980 and for his greatest achievement as president—American victory in the Cold War. Jack Kemp's challenge in the late 1970s to Republican economic orthodoxy became the other pillar of Reagan's 1980 presidential campaign and the source of his greatest domestic accomplishment—cutting tax rates and restoring the nation's economic health. And Newt Gingrich's rebellion against the budget deal of 1990 made it possible for Gingrich, after George Bush's defeat in 1992, to lead the GOP back to a Reaganite vision that inspired the watershed victory of 1994.

All of these insurrections came as shocks to the Republican establishment. No one believed they could succeed. The insurgents looked like mere troublemakers. And right now, the last thing Republican leaders on the Hill are interested in is making trouble. Majority leader Dick Armey, who used to be something of a firebrand, wrote in a memo to his colleagues last week that "making progress on the Republican agenda does not require us to create fireworks." That might be fine if a solid Republican agenda were being advanced sans fireworks. But judging by the stated plans of Armey and Senate majority leader Trent Lott, that isn't the

case either. So: No agenda. No fireworks. No nothing.

Churchill once said that there is nothing more exhilarating than being shot at and missed. But Churchill didn't know many Republicans. They're not exhilarated after surviving the near-death electoral experience of 1996. They're cautious, timid, and adrift. And so they comfort themselves with the thought that the Clinton administration may be in the process of self-destructing and that they can afford to sit back, bide their time, and wait for good things to fall into their laps.

But in politics, good things do not come to those who wait. The GOP is on the verge of a possibly historic realignment; such realignments don't happen on their own. Important opportunities for conservative policy advances are falling by the wayside, and chances for Republican political victories are being ignored as well. For the key to such advances and victories is to stay on the strategic offensive. When liberalism was ascendant, liberals always had some plan to propose, some initiative to advance, some program to initiate. Sometimes they pursued their agenda cautiously, other times boldly, but they always knew where they were going and never ceased moving forward.

There's no reason Republicans couldn't be doing this now, except that for some reason they've talked themselves into timidity and passivity. Last week, for example, one of the arguments against a ban on partial-birth abortions collapsed. The director of the National Coalition of Abortion Providers said he had knowingly lied last year by claiming that partial-birth abortions were performed almost exclusively in cases where the mother's health was at stake or the unborn child was deformed. Now, the *Washington Post* reports as a fact that at least half "and possibly the great majority" of partial-birth abortions "are done on healthy fetuses carried by women who themselves are healthy."

Why hasn't the Republican leadership on Capitol Hill been trumpeting this revelation? There will never be a better time to resurrect the legislation banning

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partial-birth abortions that President Clinton vetoed last fall. Why not bring it to the floor of one or both houses this week? One advantage to having a majority in Congress is that it allows your party to control the schedule. It is time to seize the day—but Republicans seem paralyzed instead of energized by their majority status and disinclined to put it to strategic use.

Another example: There is a raging controversy in Alabama over whether a state judge can display the Ten Commandments on the wall of his courtroom. A Supreme Court decision from 1979 suggests such a display is unconstitutional, or so another judge in Alabama has ruled. Congress could seek to correct this constitutional interpretation by statute (pursuant to Article V of the Fifteenth Amendment). Or it could move quickly on a constitutional amendment that would give public officials the right to post the Ten Commandments if they so choose. There could be hearings on such an amendment tomorrow if the leadership wanted them. And Republicans would be using a newsworthy controversy to illustrate a fundamental difference between the two parties about the role of religion in American public life. Another opportunity wasted.

One more example: A single federal district judge in California has prevented the implementation of the California Civil Rights Initiative. This could have been the opening for the debate Republicans have been seeking on two key matters: judicial usurpation and racial preferences. Republicans could immediately have proposed that the law be changed to make it more difficult for a single judge to block a constitutional decision of almost 5 million voters, perhaps by requiring the vote of a three-judge panel to delay implementation of a state constitutional initiative. Such a proposal might pass, or it might not, but it would at least be a start.

More broadly, both the courts and affirmative action invite fundamental backbench insurrections that could force these issues to the front burner this year. Newt Gingrich has made clear his unwillingness to seek a vote on repealing race and sex preferences in federal government programs. Why? Because, Gingrich's spokeswoman says, "we want to make sure we educate people about it." Do the American people really need to be educated about the injustice of racial preferences? And if they do, are Republican leaders doing anything to educate them? Maybe Republican leaders are the ones who need the educating, and

maybe their backbenchers are the ones to teach them.

Or take the courts. The many instances of judicial activism in the last two years have given us an inkling of what four more years of Clinton appointees to the federal bench could mean. There are now 93 vacancies on the federal bench. If the Republican Senate continues on a path of business as usual, the president could end up appointing some 250 judges before he leaves office. That would mean that about 60 percent of all federal judges would be Clinton appointees by the year 2001. Sen. Orrin Hatch, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, has begun talking about examining the jurisprudential and constitutional views of Clinton's nominees. Sen. Charles Grassley, the Iowa Republican, has begun making the case that not all appellate court vacancies need to be filled. And there are rumblings that Republicans will try to block a couple of pending nominees to the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, William Fletcher and Margaret McKeown.

But unless a few determined senators make the whole issue of the federal judiciary a *cause célèbre*, such efforts will have limited effect. A backbench insurrection is needed. Some senator should stand up and say he is henceforth devoting himself to preventing the appointment of new liberal judges on the appellate courts; that he is willing

to endure criticism from the *New York Times* and the American Bar Association to achieve such an end; and that, given the imperial reach of today's judiciary, it is of fundamental importance to prevent Clinton from shaping the bench for decades to come. The battle cry "No new liberal judges" should go forth into the land. It would fall on receptive ears.

Insurrections are needed in other areas in order to return the GOP to sound principle and the moral high ground. In the case of China, the Republican establishment has joined the Clinton administration in subordinating both strategic concerns and American principles to business interests. The most-favored-nation vote this spring will provide an opportunity for some brave soul to take the lead against the bipartisan policy of engagement. And the object of attack must be both the Clinton administration *and* the mandarins of the Republican foreign policy establishment—just as the objects of Reagan's assault in 1976 were the McGovernite Democratic party of American decline *and* the Ford-Kissinger Republican party of détente.

The issue of China dovetails neatly with the loom-

MAYBE REPUBLICAN LEADERS ARE THE ONES WHO NEED THE EDUCATING, AND MAYBE THEIR BACKBENCHERS ARE THE ONES TO TEACH THEM.

ing problem of national defense. The Republican leadership's obsession with balancing the budget, combined with their timidity in cutting domestic spending, has led them to accede to an irresponsibly low defense budget.

Despite a consensus that no one cares about defense or foreign policy, it is time for some insurrectionist to rise up to remind us that our national defense is the paramount obligation of the federal government. To be sure, the backbencher who offers the motion to cut domestic spending by a few percent for the sake of defense will receive little support at first. But by showing he has the gumption to bring so vital an issue to the attention of the public, that backbencher could eventually emerge as a major national figure when defense once again becomes (as it always does) a central issue of our political life.

There are other issues ripe for insurrectionary activity. An all-out assault on Clinton's education proposal, coupled with advocacy of a conservative education agenda of parental choice and local control, holds

greater promise than almost anyone in Washington realizes. So, too, would advocacy of real campaign-finance reform consistent with the First Amendment—i.e., raising or lifting the caps on individual contributions—rather than merely blocking or compromising with Clinton's proposals. And a rebellion against a pointless bipartisan budget deal that accomplishes no significant conservative policy objectives could prove interesting.

Recently, one conservative policy activist was asked why there seemed to be so few conservative ideas being aggressively advanced on the Hill. He answered that there was no shortage of ideas, but that every time he spoke to a congressman and suggested an initiative, the congressman would say, "Sounds interesting. . . . Let me check with the leadership on this."

Well, it may be early in the 105th Congress, but it's not too early to stop checking with the leadership. It's time to start challenging the leadership in ways both big and small. It's time for insurrection. ♦

THE GOP: WINNERS WHO ACT LIKE LOSERS

By Michael Barone

Which party prevailed in the 1996 congressional elections? It's not as silly a question as it sounds. The facts tell us one thing; the actions of people in and around politics tell us another. The numbers make it plain that the Republicans won. In the House of Representatives, Republicans took 227 seats and the Democrats 207. Nationwide, Republican House candidates received 44 million votes, while Democratic candidates got 43.6 million. That is only the second time since 1946 that Republicans have outpolled Democrats in House races. The first time was, of course, 1994.

Yet you still hear it said (Eleanor Clift on a recent *Crossfire*) that the Republicans were repudiated in 1996. And she's not the only one who thinks so; look at the House Republicans themselves. They have been

acting like whipped dogs. No, they're not going to take a stand on budget issues before the president does, or bring forward their own budget; they might get attacked for it, after all. And they're certainly not going to say anything about Medicare and entitlements; they got hammered on Medicare in the last election and they're not going to let it happen again, no, sir. Instead, they're going to hunker down and let what they think is an automatic sixth-year-of-a-presidency jinx reelect them in 1998. Maybe then they might begin advancing their views on public policy.

It seems that Republicans have gotten just about everything precisely wrong about the 1996 results. Victory is not automatic for Republican incumbents in 1998. As the Democrats found to their dismay in 1994, institutional advantages can keep you in power only so long; they fail when someone else comes along with more attractive ideas.

More important, House Republicans do not under-

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stand that they did more than just survive the Democratic onslaught against their 1995 plan to slow the growth of Medicare. It used to be said that entitlements like Social Security and Medicare were the third rail of American politics: Touch them and you die. Someone should tell the House Republicans and the press that the third rail of American politics seems to have shorted out.

True, Republicans did not begin making their case on Medicare—and addressing Democratic caricatures of their proposals—until October 1996, three weeks before the election. At that point, in a concerted campaign of advertising and public appearances, Republicans made a three-pronged argument in defense of their actions. First, they said, the Medicare system was broken, and they had testimony from Clinton's own Social Security trustees to prove it. Second, the Republicans had a plan to fix Medicare not by cutting but by slowing down its growth. Third, the Republicans had devised a so-called lock-box system to ensure that all Medicare savings went right back into the Medicare system.

The strategy, it may surprise you to learn, worked. Democratic pollster Peter Hart told me that the Medicare issue simply stopped working for Democrats in mid-October. Charles Cook nicely summarizes the so-called generic numbers in his invaluable *Cook Political Report*. From May through early October, voters over the age of 65 who were asked whether they would cast their ballot for the Democratic or Republican candidate in their district chose the Democrat by a huge margin, 47-31 percent. But in a poll taken November 1-4, the Democratic advantage among the elderly was down to a statistically insignificant 41 to 40 percent. On Election Day, exit polls showed the 65-plus vote dead even, 49-49.

Even Arizona and elderly-laden Florida, the two states Bill Clinton lost in 1992 and won in 1996, told the same story. Medicare did not tip the balance to Clinton, the exit polls show; Clinton's popularity among Hispanic voters did (environmental issues made a difference as well). And even if Medicare did take votes away from the Republican presidential candidate in Florida and Arizona, the issue did *not* cost Republicans any House seats. In fact, Republican candidates for the House of Representatives received 56 percent of the vote overall in Florida and 61 percent in Arizona. (And in the two Florida districts with the nation's largest percentage of elderly residents, Republicans Clay Shaw and Dan Miller each got more than 60 percent of the vote.)

But wasn't the Republican victory just an accident? Didn't they just squeak through because news of the

Clinton Asian-money scandal broke in the last two weeks of the campaign? Certainly, many House elections were decided by close margins. But the Republican gains in the last weeks were not the result of Democratic missteps. If you look at elections all over the world in the last decade or so, you will see that the party of the Right usually wins—not by leading throughout the campaign, but by surging ahead in the final weeks or months.

Why? Because until then the media, sympathetic to parties of the Left almost everywhere, tend to control the dialogue. Only in the last weeks can the Right get out its message relatively unmediated and undisparaged by the press. This was true in the United Kingdom in 1992, in the U.S. House elections in 1994, in Ontario in 1995, and in Israel in 1996.

The same pattern held for Republicans on the subject of Medicare. By October, the press had been writing for months that Medicare was killing the Republicans, and since their Medicare stories had already been written, they turned to other things. They did not bother to look very deeply at the Republican Medicare counteroffensive, nor did the Republicans encourage them to do so (because they would then try to trash it). They did not check the poll numbers Hart was noticing during the campaign and Cook chronicled after. They did no reporting and let their previous characterizations stand—the more so because that outdated reporting pointed to a result most reporters had long been predicting and wanted to see themselves: a chastising defeat for an overreaching Republican majority.

Press bias is unable to determine the results of elections, but it can shape how almost everyone sees them before and after. Two hundred days of stories about the possibility of Republicans' losing the House have not been forgotten, and their cumulative effect has tended to overshadow the two days of stories about how they actually won it. Even during those two days the victory was understated. The press declared two Republican incumbents beaten in Washington state while there were still 40,000 absentee votes out; both won.

Moreover, Republicans may have been in better shape even during those 200 days of negative stories. There is some reason to believe that public polls in this campaign cycle may well have been tilted against the Republicans. This was certainly true of the public polls immediately before the election, almost all of which suggested Bill Clinton would win by a wider margin than actually occurred and that Democrats

would win the House by margins like those in 1988, 1990, and 1992. The final polls were, with one exception, in the statistical margin of error these polls always warn about. But the likelihood of all the polls' being off on one side of the political spectrum and none on the other is something like the odds of shooting seven straight sevens in craps: It could happen, but a sensible person will start to wonder whether the dice aren't loaded. (One theory—and it is no more than a theory so far—is that conservatives are more likely than others to refuse to respond to polls, particularly those polls taken by media outlets that conservatives consider biased. If so, they're hurting their own cause.)

The efficiency of the political marketplace, like the efficiency of the economic marketplace, depends on the full dissemination of accurate information. Today almost all the players in the political marketplace seem to think that the Republicans got pasted in House elections and that they ended up retaining their majority by a fluke. Acting on this misinformation will produce less than optimal vote-winning behavior, especially for the Republicans. They seem to think that if they avoid stating any positions on issues, the electoral calendar will take care of them. But just the opposite could be true: If they fail to give voters any reason to vote for them, the Democrats might seize the opportunity to do that, and win back the House.

This may already be happening. When Bill Clinton's plan for dealing with Medicare was announced last month, it received strong criticism for being a cen-

tralized, command-and-control scheme that would not work and would deny seniors the choices others have in choosing medical plans. Who made the argument? Not Republicans, who might have argued that their Medicare plans do offer choices to seniors. No, it was made by newly elected senator Ron Wyden, who began his career as an advocate for seniors and who is one of the few Democrats to win a seat formerly held by a Republican between November 1992 and November 1996. Wyden is thinking intelligently about public policy and politics. Republicans seem to be hunkering down, like dogs puzzled about why they have been whipped and hoping to avoid being hit again.

Today power is flying out from Washington to the states, to local governments, to private organizations and mediating institutions and families and individuals. That movement is in line with what most Republicans have urged for years and against what most Democrats have urged.

The smart move for Democrats is to argue for small government interventions, to help individuals and families make their way, and this is what smart Democrats like Wyden are doing. The smart move for Republicans is to argue for continued dispersion of power to give individuals and families choices about how to make their way. But most Republicans seem frozen with fear. They believe their policies are unpopular and that their only hope is to conceal what they are doing. Bill Clinton knows he won in 1996. When are House Republicans going to wake up and realize they won the last election too? ♦

HOW TO DEFUSE THE YOUTH CRIME BOMB

By John J. DiIulio, Jr.

Today America is home to about 57 million children under age 15, some 20 million of them ages 4 to 8. The teenage population will top 30 million by 2006, the highest since 1975. The nation's

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two most respected criminologists, James Q. Wilson of UCLA and Marvin E. Wolfgang of the University of Pennsylvania, agree that this demographic bulge spells trouble. So does Harvard's Philip Heyman, a former deputy attorney general in the Clinton administration. The victims of youth crime, as well as the perpetrators, Heyman writes, "are largely concentrated among minority males in urban centers. . . . That age group will grow over the next 15 years." Indeed it will. By the

year 2010, there will be nearly 5 million nonwhite males ages 15-24 in the population, up from 3.4 million in 1980.

A recent drop in violent youth crime rates—in 1994-95, arrests of 10-to-17-year-olds fell nationally by 2.9 percent—may be transitory. James Alan Fox, dean of the College of Criminal Justice at Northeastern University, is warning that an explosion in juvenile crime in a few years' time is "really, really possible."

The criminologists are right, but make that *another* explosion in youth crime. Juvenile violent crime arrest rates rose 5.2 percent in 1987-88, 16.8 percent in 1988-89, 12.1 percent in 1989-90, 7.6 percent in 1990-91, and by at least 4.4 percent in every year thereafter until 1994-95. In 1994 alone there were over 2.7 million arrests of persons under age 18—a third of them under age 15. That was up; a 59 percent increase from 1991. Juveniles were responsible for an estimated 14 percent of all violent crimes and a quarter of all property crimes known to the police. Nationally, juveniles committed an estimated 137,000 more violent crimes in 1994 than in 1985 and were responsible for 26 percent of the growth in violent crime over that period. There were nearly 4,000 murders committed by teenagers in 1995.

Likewise, the number of juvenile drug arrests increased from roughly 65,000 in 1990 to 147,000 in 1995. The increased use and availability of drugs has fueled the growth of drug-dealing street gangs, some of which are led by adults who turn small children into narcotics customers and sellers. Most studies estimate the number of youth gangsters well into the hundreds of thousands.

To explain this phenomenon, liberals stress risk factors like poverty and joblessness. Their data: The percentage of children under age 6 living in households with annual incomes under \$7,600 doubled between 1975 and 1994. Fewer than half of young black high-school dropouts were either working or looking for work during 1994.

Conservatives stress risk factors like births to unmarried teenagers and child abuse and neglect. The teenage illegitimacy ratio (the percentage of all live births to teens ages 15-19 that occur out of wedlock) rose from 29.5 percent in 1970 to 76 percent in 1994. And the number of substantiated cases of child mal-

treatment rose by 20 percent from 1990 to 1993, the year it broke a million.

By either analysis, it is clear that more at-risk youth are on the way. Both the Clinton administration and the Republican Congress seem duly mindful of the potential juvenile crime problem, but neither side shows much sign of understanding the sorts of local, community-based strategies that are needed to avert it.

On February 19, President Clinton appeared in Boston, a city that over the last two years has experienced steep drops in its youth crime rate, to announce an "offensive" against juvenile crime. If new policies are not enacted soon, he said, "our country is going to be living in chaos." The president proposed spending about \$500 million in new federal money over the next two years, including \$200 million to assist state and local prosecutors in going after street gangs and violent juveniles and another \$60 million to fund a hodgepodge of after-school programs. The president and other administration officials celebrated the city's innovative crime-prevention efforts, including Operation Night Light, a multifaceted program in which local police and probation officers work together to ensure that juvenile offenders are adequately supervised.

But, as the *Boston Globe* reported, the Clinton entourage very nearly snubbed the inner-city clergymen who have worked assiduously to roust drug dealers, break up street gangs, and provide safe havens for youngsters. In interviews I've conducted, the Boston police and probation officials who have administered Operation Night Light and other programs are themselves quick to credit the ministers. "We could not succeed without the churches," says Milt Britton, a 27-year veteran of the city's probation department. Britton, an African-American who lives and works in the city's high-crime districts, runs a "fatherhood initiative" program that seeks to involve young males who have had run-ins with the law in the lives of the neighborhood children they have fathered.

The Clinton administration has repeatedly touted such community-based anti-crime efforts and has flashed an open federal wallet at them in the form of myriad Justice Department, HUD, and other grant programs. But as one inner-city Boston churchman says, "That Beltway rap is fine, except it means nothing on the streets when you're handling young gangsters at 2 a.m., and nothing when you can't renovate a

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church building for kids or give young folks low-wage jobs or make productive use of whatever public funds you have because of stupid, costly federal regulations and unholy amounts of required paperwork.”

These remarks would suggest that the Republican commitment to devolving such efforts from the federal government to the state and local levels is the right approach. But strangely, the GOP’s congressional leaders want to help by further federalizing the juvenile justice system. The latest version of the Senate Republicans’ juvenile crime bill, for example, requires that a juvenile age 14 or older “who is alleged to have committed an act that, if committed by an adult, would be a criminal offense, be tried as an adult at the discretion of the U.S. Attorney [if] there is a substantial Federal interest in the case or the offense to warrant the exercise of Federal jurisdiction.” The bill would also federalize the handling of “any offense committed in connection with, or in furtherance of, the activities of a criminal street gang where the defendant was a member of such a gang at the time of the offense.”

There are several basic problems with this. First, as I have argued previously in these pages, it is a gross penological mistake to house even youth offenders convicted of violent crimes with adult criminals. Second, it is fanciful in any case to suppose that new federal laws will do what a decade’s worth of get-tough state laws targeted on violent and high-rate juvenile offenders have failed to do, namely, result in more than a tiny fraction of kids who murder, rape, rob, burglarize, assault, or deal deadly drugs being prosecuted and sentenced “as adults.”

In 1992 only 1.6 percent of “delinquency” cases were sent from juvenile to criminal court. In many jurisdictions, “waiving” a case to another court is a tedious, time-consuming bear of a legal wrangle that typically falls on the shoulders of overworked assistant district attorneys. “You fight your heart out to get a teen thug into criminal court,” one mid-sized-city assistant D.A. told me, “and he’ll probably end up on probation—just like most adult criminals do.”

The overarching problem with Washington’s various approaches to juvenile crime is that they trifle with (in the case of the praise-and-spend White House) or largely ignore (in the case of the never-say-

midnight-basketball Republicans) hard-won lessons about what actually works to stop juvenile crime before it starts. Former New York City police commissioner William Bratton, whose innovative policing practices are properly credited for the city’s dramatic drops in crime, has recently emphasized that while better policing is pivotal to cutting crime, “prevention has simply got to be a big part of the long-term anti-crime equation.”

Bratton is a member of the bipartisan Council on Crime in America. Together with Gary Walker, the president of Public/Private Ventures, a nonprofit youth-development research organization in Philadelphia, I assisted the council in drafting its report, *Saving Children, Preventing Crime*, which was just released by the Manhattan Institute’s Center for Civic Innovation. The report focuses attention on the present and

impending youth crime problem and recommends three promising community-based prevention strategies—monitoring, mentoring, and ministering.

First, “monitoring” refers to community-based supervision of youth offenders, whether by professional probation officers or by neighborhood adults. Despite the passage of get-tough juvenile crime laws in many states, the majority of adjudicated juvenile offenders get probation, not incarceration. In 1993, 520,600 cases disposed of by juvenile courts resulted in proba-

tion. Between 1989 and 1993, the number of juvenile cases involving a “person offense” such as homicide, rape, robbery, and assault soared 45 percent. Probation officers, forced to handle more serious cases than ever, often have little time for first-time juvenile offenders who are not yet serious criminals but may turn out to be.

Private citizens can help. A prime example is Philadelphia’s Youth Aid Panel program. Panels of adult volunteers in each of the city’s police districts hear cases of first-time juvenile offenders and mete out punishments ranging from curfews to community service. The estimated recidivism rate is an impressively low 20 percent.

Second, “mentoring” by citizen-volunteers benefits at-risk youth to an extent that even some of its boosters might find surprising. Consider, for example, the findings compiled by Public/Private Ventures in its research on 1,000 youngsters aged 10-16, almost all of them from low-income, single-parent families, who

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participated in Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America. Juveniles matched with mentors were 46 percent less likely than a comparison group to initiate drug use, 27 percent less likely to start drinking, one third less likely to commit assault, and half as likely to be truant from school. The “mentors” were not trained in drug prevention, remedial tutoring, or family therapy. And, yet, by becoming their friends and providing support to these youths, they influenced young lives in many ways.

Finally, “ministering.” This refers to the work of local churches that deal with at-risk youth. In New York City, for example, the New York Theological Seminary has trained over 2,000 ministers who are now providing their communities with a wide range of youth outreach services—literacy training, after-school programs, and the like. One graduate, Rev-

erend Hilary Gaston of the Bronx, came to what he calls his “latch-key ministry” for youth after working for a decade as a police officer. He has his counterparts in big cities all across the country.

But for monitoring, mentoring, and ministering to expand their effectiveness—and we need them to expand *now*—more citizens must volunteer, and public policy must recognize the worth of this approach. As William Bennett, one of the Council on Crime co-chairmen, has stressed, that will happen only when the rest of us adopt the “fourth M” of crime prevention: a sense of moral obligation to America’s children that transcends conventional political pontification. Getting warm-blooded adults into the lives of kids is the one sure way we have of saving our youngest, our most vulnerable, and potentially our most dangerous fellow citizens. ♦

THE HISTORY STANDARDS: STILL AN OUTRAGE

By David Warren Saxe

When the Senate voted 99-1 two years ago to condemn the national history standards drawn up at the behest of the federal government, people concerned about the brainwashing of school children with politically correct history figured the battle had been won. Wrong. Sure, the standards-writers pieced together a revised version that seemed to mollify most critics, highlighting a previously snubbed George Washington and other neglected heroes and stories. But that all now seems a ruse. When children turn to page one of their new history textbooks, they will read a history entirely in keeping with the seemingly rejected first set of standards.

Those interested may think that Lynne Cheney, who launched the attack on the standards in October 1994, nailed them when she exposed the bogus “three worlds meet” theory according to which Native Americans, Africans, and Europeans shared equally in the American founding. Cheney raised the nation’s con-

sciousness by laying bare the standards’ misplaced emphasis on the “grandeur” of Mansa Musa’s court, their suggestion that students hold a mock trial of John D. Rockefeller, their near deification of American Indians, their disproportionate coverage of the Ku Klux Klan and McCarthyism, and their omission of Alexander Graham Bell, Thomas Edison, Albert Einstein, Jonas Salk, and the Wright brothers.

But Cheney’s exposé, though absolutely correct, turns out to have had little impact on educators and publishers. Also ignored were scholarly critiques of the standards by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Herman Belz, Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, and John Patrick Diggins, among others, as well as scathing accounts by media commentators. Even President Clinton and presidential candidate Bob Dole complained about the standards in the 1996 campaign. Nevertheless, certain of support from the American Historical Association and a host of like-minded groups, which overwhelmingly approved of the original standards, educators and publishers simply forged ahead.

A comprehensive review of eight recent high

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school history texts from the major publishers in the field shows that the influence of the original, condemned history standards is pervasive. In fact, these books read like one long lawyer's brief in the case of *Oppressed People v. White Males*. At every juncture of American history, the trinity of race, class, and gender is revealed to be somehow at work.

Thus (using Cheney's objections to the original standards as a handy reference), it turns out that

Mansa Musa, unknown to most Americans, now is a fixture of U.S. history texts. *Why We Remember*, published by Addison Wesley, reports that Europeans were so impressed with "Mali's greatest emperor" and his slaves toting gold to Mecca that they "pictured him in an atlas"; not worth noting, apparently, is

the sophistication of a culture whose geographers produced illustrated atlases in the 14th century. Globe Fearon's *One Nation, Many People* (the most race-based text of the lot) praises Mansa and credits Askia Muhammad Toure of the Songhai Empire for his "strong and fair government . . . and fair taxation," but it ignores the fact that their economies were based upon slavery.

When they do discuss slavery in Africa, these books underscore a qualitative and moral difference between West African and North American slavery. Holt Rinehart Winston's *The American Nation* explains that "many slaves in West African society were either criminals or captives taken in war. . . . Most could marry, and their children did not become slaves. Moreover, slavery was only temporary [and] individuals could obtain their freedom." For students reading these texts, West African slavery wasn't really so bad, and slavery didn't become "devastating" and "especially painful" until Europeans began to "traffic in human slaves."

Recycling another item Lynne Cheney had singled out for ridicule, Glencoe's *History of a Free Nation* asks students whether the United States would have been "better off with or without" John D. Rockefeller. The KKK and McCarthyism rate 15 mentions in the index of Glencoe's *American Odyssey* against zero for

the *Federalist Papers*.

Houghton Mifflin's *History of the United States* reduces Edison's contributions to four words: "Edison invented electric light." McDougal Littell's *America: Past and Promise* contains a picture of Edison, as does *The American Nation*, but both provide larger pictures with captions of black inventors Granville T. Woods, a supposed Edison rival, and Lewis Latimer, Edison's obscure assistant.

The new texts feature feminist Fanny Wright, black jurist Jonathan J. Wright, author Richard Wright, and architect Frank Lloyd Wright, but the Wright brothers have all but disappeared. Of the books reviewed here, only *The American Nation* mentions America's famous inventor brothers, with this single caption:

"US Army buys first airplane from the Wright brothers." Albert Einstein isn't remembered for developing the revolutionary theory of relativity; when he is mentioned (and most texts ignore him), he is cast as a minor figure in a sidebar, as a scientist who wrote a letter to Franklin Roosevelt urging the development of the atomic bomb. Prentice Hall's *America: Pathways to the Present* offers only a picture of Einstein, with the caption: "Albert Einstein informs President Roosevelt that atomic weapons are possible." Was Einstein, then, the evil madman behind nuclear weapons?

American Odyssey (whose author, Gary Nash, co-directed the standards-writing project) introduces the obscure 19th-century sociologist Lester Frank Ward, who argued that "the shaping of a society's destiny was the job of government." Students are asked to "defend Ward's view that government should 'liberate the forces of society,'" versus the possibility that such an idea "might lead to a tyrannical government." Given the 45 lines of text on the importance of Ward, it's clear which side is meant to prevail and what idea is to be planted in the heads of kids.

The new texts present American dealings with Indian populations not as war between incompatible cultures, but as something explained by racism. *America: Pathways to the Present* is typical. It perpetuates the myth of the noble Indian with the story of Tecumseh and his brother Tenskwatawa, who leave "a vital legacy of defiance of invasion and respect for themselves, their people, and their culture. In later years, they would be a model for Native Americans reclaiming their traditions." In this text, students learn about the massacres at Sand Creek and Wounded Knee, which point to the racism of the oppressors, but never hear of the cruel and vicious treatment of settlers at the hands of Indians in the Wyoming Massacre, the scalping of women and children at Ft. Mims, or hundreds of oth-

er brutal and horrific encounters.

The history of relations between Indians and settlers is ultimately not a happy one for Indians, who lost the battles and wars. But these texts do not give students the opportunity to understand that racism alone cannot explain why the Indian wars were fought or why the Indians lost. Unless students get a more rounded history, they will not see that people can be animated by various human impulses: They can be moved by the desire for freedom or the lust for revenge; by hate or greed; by a sense of duty or the yearning for glory. To reduce human action to racism is to ignore the full range, complexity, and reality of human life.

Most pernicious of all, perhaps, is these books' distortion of the American founding. The central concern, here as in the condemned standards, is to account for minorities. In accordance with the "three worlds meet" view, the standards open the story not with the English and other Europeans (where it actually begins), but with "the first peopling of the Americas some 30,000 years ago." They go on to discuss "the spread of human societies and the rise of diverse cultures in the Americas" in preparation for delving into the "historical convergence of European, African, and Native American peoples." The original standards are explicit about the rationale for this theory: It is designed to address present-day concerns over perceived social injustice. Both the standards and the texts focus their discussion of American origins on disputes over land and not on the liberal democratic ideas of the Enlightenment or the English customs, traditions, institutions, religions, history, and language whose predominance in America was decisive.

The shift from ideas to land permits the standards-writers and textbook-writers to view American history as a saga of race wars, through which an amorphous European juggernaut pursued the project of destroying innocent Indians, Africans, and Asians. If children are informed that America has been from the beginning a "multicultural" entity where some participants sought to protect their land and others sought to steal it, not only can the bothersome history of discovery, conquest, and settlement and the English heritage of political ideas be swept away and forgotten, but every facet of history is transformed into tragedy for the losers. And of course, to repair the awful damage of the past, immediate government action is required.

The purpose of this instruction is no mere dissemination of historical information. It is massive indoctrination, the politicization of history under the guise of boosting minorities' self-esteem. Textbook authors willingly toot the horns of the so-called excluded but

balk at crediting Europeans with any distinction. Students are told that black Africa had a "great center of learning" in Timbuktu but know nothing of the more than 60 universities in Europe by the time of Columbus. How can they understand our history without some comparative perspective on the accomplishments of European and other civilizations?

The American Nation perfectly reflects the new template for history textbooks: The old "limited" history of America was about "politicians, military leaders, and other notables, most of them white males whose ancestors had come from the British Isles or northern Europe. Today's history is far richer in social texture, [a history that includes] men and women, Native Americans, and immigrants from Europe, Latin America, Africa, Asia, and all other parts of the world." All eight of these books start from the same assumption as the history standards: Columbus is the bad guy, and Native Americans and Africans—but not the English or other Europeans—are the heirs to rich cultures.

Even in schools where teachers say they do not use textbooks, the influence of the original history standards is plain. A fifth-grade curriculum from State College, Pa., for example, doesn't bother having students read the actual Declaration of Independence, but does have them revise it. After discussing "why the Declaration of Independence only lists rights for white, adult males," children are encouraged to "choose one group that was omitted and write how they might include statements that would include the rights of women, children, African Americans, and Native Americans." When studying the Constitution, students are asked to provide an answer for the inclusion problem posed by the phrase "We the people . . ."

The trouble with this manufactured history is not only that it is false, but also that it is unlikely to produce citizens who understand the tenets of liberal democratic government. Instead, children's heads are being filled with a sentimental, politically correct version of their heritage. Given the shelf-life of history texts, American children for at least the next decade

RACISM IS NOT THE ONLY MOTIVE. PEOPLE CAN ALSO BE MOVED BY THE DESIRE FOR FREEDOM OR THE LUST FOR REVENGE; BY HATE OR GREED; BY A SENSE OF DUTY OR THE YEARNING FOR GLORY.

may be unable to think of the founding fathers without a cynical laugh. For that matter, our youngsters will be unlikely to think of most other white male figures as anything but racist, sexist elitists.

Against this dismal backdrop, there is, happily, one excellent new history series from a major publisher, Oxford University Press's *A History of US*. And, of course, careful teachers can mitigate the ill effects of

the other new texts with supplements and debates crafted to expose errors and make up for omissions. But diligent parents should always review their children's lessons and homework for curricular abuse. As the new textbooks come into use, one fact is clear: The national history standards once thought to be discredited have made their way into the nation's classrooms, and we are all the losers. ♦

THE NEW CONSERVATIVE ATTACK ON THE SUBURBS

By Mark Gauvreau Judge

Last year, when the skies cleared following a three-day blizzard that had dumped 22 inches of snow and had trapped me inside my suburban home, I quickly donned my boots, pushed open the front door, and squeezed outside. And all at once it hit me: There was nowhere to go. I was standing on a street that had no sidewalk at the end of a cul-de-sac; the closest tavern was four miles away, and only a dog sled could reach it. It was time to return to urban America. The suburbs, where I had been raised and to which I had retreated as an adult, had finally defeated me.

Anti-suburban sentiments like mine have spawned something of an industry these past few years. A growing movement called the New Urbanism, made up of architects, journalists, academics, and town planners, has dedicated itself to the proposition that the suburbanization of America has led to many of the country's social, psychological, and spiritual problems. For, rather than forming a new American community far from the "lonely crowd" discerned by David Riesman and Nathan Glazer in the urban masses, the suburbs have proved to be unfriendly and increasingly untraversable landscapes that isolate people in what might be called a "lonely sprawl."

What is striking about these new criticisms of suburbia is that they come not from the left of the political spectrum, where such arguments have long found a

home, but from conservatives.

The New Urbanist credo is most pungently spelled out by James Howard Kunstler in his book *The Geography of Nowhere* and its recently published sequel *Home from Nowhere*. Kunstler decries America's modern landscape—its "clogged highways, strip malls, tract houses, franchise fry pits, parking lots, junked cities and ravaged countryside"—as the source of social ills that are "bankrupting us economically, socially, ecologically, and spiritually."

The disconnection from neighbors and the sense of suburban isolation is, Kunstler thinks, a breeding ground for dependence on government. A lively community can help people to develop a sense of self-sufficiency. The suburbs, though, have been anything but lively. Kunstler argues that the story of American suburbanization after the Second World War is one of governmental interference and manipulation through giant public-works projects and zoning.

According to Kunstler, before the war there had been a cultural consensus about how our towns and cities should be built. Sized to human scale rather than for automobiles, American towns and cities had stores within walking distance of housing, broad sidewalks with trees, and public transportation. The street was an orderly row of ornate façades, not a strip-mall purgatory of cheap boxy warehouses and parking lagoons. Our civic buildings, like the town courthouse and the local school, were designed with an eye toward their importance, their columns echoing with authority, as opposed to the unimposing shoeboxes of the 1960s and 1970s, which echo with nothing.

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The Washington, D.C., suburb of Kentlands

What happened? According to Kunstler, zoning and planning happened—rules intended to ensure the viability of towns and cities and prepare them for economic development. To be sure, these rules originally had humane and understandable goals. It is true that Americans once lived in tight-knit, mixed-income urban communities with dance halls, corner taverns, and local churches. But they also lived dangerously close to the factories where they worked, and that meant living with and around industrial pollution. It seemed to make sense to separate the places people lived from the places they worked through rules and regulations that came to be known as zoning.

But in the postwar era, Kunstler writes, ideas about zoning and transportation were “taken to an absurd extreme. Zoning itself began to overshadow all the historic elements of civic art and civic life. . . . Shopping was declared an obnoxious industrial activity around which people shouldn’t be allowed to live. This tended to destroy age-old physical relationships between shopping and living, as embodied, say, in Main Street.”

After all, modern American suburbs are *all* planned communities to some extent, governed by land-use rules that determine how many square feet of lawn must front each house and precisely what size of house may be built. And they would have been unimaginable had it not been for government support—central planning, in other words—in the form of road projects, sewage projects, and school construc-

tion. The result, in many cases, was jury-rigged, committee-driven, politicized mediocrity. In 1961, the leftist social critic Lewis Mumford derided the ur-New York suburb called Levittown for being “a multitude of uniform, unidentifiable houses, lined up inflexibly, at uniform distances on uniform roads, . . . inhabited by people of the same class, the same incomes, the same age group, witnessing the same television performances, eating the same tasteless prefabricated

foods from the same freezers, conforming in every outward and inward way to a common mold manufactured in the same central metropolis.” Mumford concluded that “the ultimate effect of the suburban escape in our time is, ironically, a low-grade uniform environment from which escape is impossible.”

To leftist intellectuals in the 1950s and ’60s, the suburbs were a conformist nightmare, the center of the stifling bourgeois life created by a ravenous consumer culture. But to the generation that was exhausted from fighting the war, suburbs offered space to breathe, affordable housing, and the possibility of raising children free from the anxieties of urban life. The leftist prattle against the suburbs notwithstanding, they afforded middle-class Americans the chance of owning a home and making a new life for themselves. And it was an easier life: Since there weren’t yet many cars on the road, getting to and from work was a breeze, far more comfortable than a crowded subway or bus commute. When my parents first moved to the suburbs twenty miles from downtown Washington, my father could make it to work in his VW bug in thirty minutes. Now, however, the trip to town can take an hour and a half, and the Federal Highway Administration predicts that freeway congestion will quadruple in the next twenty years and double on smaller roads. (And this comes at a time when the United States spends almost \$200 million per day on streets and roads.) An infrastructure built for a slower and less crowded time is no longer sufficient.

A life spent in traffic is a suggestive image for the true problem of suburban existence: The sense of alienation and isolation. In the suburbs, with their lack of common space, you can live down the street from someone for twenty years and never even lay eyes on him. Kids attend distant schools and make friends in disparate areas, which means they do not spend their time in and around the house, but commute for play as well as school. People live in houses in close proximity to one another, but in many cases they might as well be living on 1,000-acre farms.



Celebration, a neo-traditional development outside Disney World

All this speaks against a growing communitarian spirit among American conservatives. In the November/December 1996 issue of the *American Enterprise*, editor Karl Zinsmeister offers “A Conservative Case Against Suburbia” that casts a wide philosophical net: “The hurried life, the disappearance of family time, the weakening of generational links, our ignorance of history, our lack of local ties, an exaggerated focus on money, the anonymity of community life, the rise of radical feminism, the decline of civic action, the tyrannical dominance of TV and pop culture over leisure time—all of these problems have been fed, and in some cases instigated, by suburbanization, in ways that few people anticipated a generation ago when mass suburbs were first created.”

Zinsmeister, who has done careful work as a social scientist that challenged the feminist enthusiasm for day care, believes that Betty Friedan’s 1963 ur-feminist work *The Feminine Mystique* was an “anguished cry” from suburban Westchester County for a sense of place where there really was none. “Americans who would prefer that their wives and daughters not follow Friedan down the path to NOW-style feminism,” Zinsmeister warns, “would do well to think hard about how the current structure of our suburban communities feeds this problem.” He quotes urban experts

like Kunstler and Jane Jacobs, whose seminal 1961 work *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* was the first to note that traditional city neighborhoods, even if inhabited by the poor, have a thriving social life and a natural crime deterrent in the people who populate the pedestrian-friendly streets.

Zinsmeister also puts a stake in the heart of the idea that suburbanization is simply the result of the natural flow of the free market. It was the government, after all, that offered incentives for new families to move to the suburbs in the form of low-interest mortgages and road-building programs. Such moves, Zinsmeister notes, guaranteed that “new thoroughfares . . . wrecked many existing communities, city neighborhoods were slashed by elevated highways, and outlying towns had the life snuffed out of them by beltways and controlled-access interstates.”

Zinsmeister’s words do represent an odd cultural inversion, as does the fact that the entire issue of the *American Enterprise* in which his piece appeared is dedicated to the New Urbanist movement. As his citation of Betty Friedan indicates, conservative dissatisfaction with suburbia has strange ideological roots. But of such ironies is intellectual history made—and another signal irony is that some very interesting ideas about how to help solve some of the social problems of sub-

urbia are coming under attack these days from the left.

Kunstler and Zinsmeister are not writing in a vacuum; their ideas are finding actual physical expression in the work of architects like Andres Duany and Leon Krier. "The congested, unsatisfying suburban sprawl and disintegrating city centers of today are not the product of laissez-faire or mindless greed," Duany, whose family fled Castro's Cuba in 1960, once wrote. They are instead the "direct result of zoning and building ordinances zealously administered by planning departments."

These designers are trying to bring the New Urbanism to suburbia, with a series of developments across the country that feature layouts based to some degree on 19th-century villages—sidewalks, houses close together, village greens, stores in walking distance. The most famous are Kentlands, outside of Washington, D.C., and Celebration, an entire town under construction right outside Disney World that will eventually be home to 20,000.

Only 400 people are living in Celebration right now, but it has already come under attack for being a Disney theme-park version of a small town sandblasted of the conflict and culture of real democracy. In an oddly angry piece in the October 1996 issue of *Harper's*, Russ Rymer seemed to be wishing a horrible civic accident on Celebration to let its residents know that they can't hide from the messiness of real democracy. "Twenty-thousand people have a way of getting out of hand," Rymer sneered, evoking images of Freddy Kruger amidst the town's Mayberry charms. And in the *Washington Post*, Caroline E. Mayer described a trip she took to the sparsely populated Celebration and found it already suffused with "the worst of small-town living." It seems two couples unhappy with life in the new town were afraid to talk about it publicly, Mayer said, because they feared being "ostracized by the rest of the community."

It would be foolish to deny that neighbors and neighborliness can be stifling; throughout American history there has been a deep tension between the individualism many of us crave and the community the society as a whole needs. The New Urbanists are acutely conscious of this.

But at least when your neighbors stifle you, you are not having the rules of your life imposed on you from above by zoning officials and planners. For what is oppressive in neighborliness is also enveloping—and

it is the very spirit of envelopment, of engrossment in the lives of others, that is lost in the suburbs. The late Christopher Lasch once noted that when people live close by each other, they hear an "inner voice that asks what the guys would think." Lasch claimed that this voice "can serve as a powerful agency of what used to be called social control (when this term referred to self-imposed community sanctions rather than to the authority imposed by experts in behavior modification and other alien specialists)."

Critics insist that the New Urbanists are engaged in an effort to revive the small town when what is needed is the reinvigoration of cities. The imputation is clear: The critics believe the New Urbanists want to banish the poor, the black, the Hispanic, and once everything is made lily-white, to impose a kind of moral zoning on everyone else.

The question is whether there might be a new amalgam, a way of bringing together the social benefits of a cohesive community with the convenience and services of a big city and the affordability of suburbia. Kunstler thinks there is, and that the answer lies in de-zoning, deregulating, and giving up on ideas whose failure has led to a steep and entirely unnecessary increase in the cost of housing.

"Our affordable housing crisis is entirely of our own making," Kunstler writes. "We think the

government must step in and solve this problem by going into the house-building business. In other societies . . . the government gives a special tax break to anyone who puts in an accessory apartment on their property," something that most modern zoning prohibits. "We could create a vast supply of decent housing practically overnight, without bureaucracy or public funds. To make it slum-proof, stipulate that [the house with the accessory apartment] must be owner occupied. Let the landlord be the policeman."

It is perhaps the most interesting irony of all that these neo-Jeffersonian New Urbanists now see the ideal of civic virtue in the very cities Jefferson himself believed made civic virtue impossible. But there is a logic to their vision, a logic that says it may be unnecessary to reinvent suburbia. For with their large and crumbling stock of housing and their remarkable infrastructure, America's rusting, decaying cities do have the potential in the first few decades of the 21st century to become the vibrant places they were in the first few decades of the 20th. ♦

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CIVIL RIGHTS THE RIGHT WAY

Bayard Rustin as His Friends Knew Him

By Midge Decter

Does anybody really remember Bayard Rustin any more—not who he was so much as what he was like? This is a question raised by a reading of Jervis Anderson's new biography, *Bayard Rustin: Troubles I've Seen*. As it happens, Anderson is both a gifted writer and a serious, hard-working historian, and having served for a while in the late 1960s as Bayard's research assistant, he even knew his subject at first hand. Moreover, the sheer volume of documentary sources and interviews cited in the book's acknowledgments is truly impressive. In other words, this biography is clearly a careful and loving piece of work. But like the passages quoted from the interviews with Bayard's old friends and associates, Anderson's portrait of the man, as distinct from his career, ends up lifeless on the page.

Anderson does not seem to have omitted much, factually speaking, from the book. And after all, simply taken by itself Bayard's career makes a pretty fascinating story. Born in 1917 and raised a Quaker, he was for a brief time a Communist, but made his first full-scale professional commitment to pacifism. Though he was much admired as a singer and thought by many to have a real future as a musician, he went to work for the peace movement in 1941 (and was a conscientious objector in World War II). For a time in the 1940s he was employed as a field rep-

Midge Decter is the author of three books and hundreds of essays.

representative of A.J. Muste's Fellowship of Reconciliation, and subsequently, after a personal falling out with Muste, he switched to the more activist War Resisters' League.

From there he moved on to the civil-rights movement, where he was to become—at least for a few happy moments in the ultimately unhappy period that came to be known as The

Jervis Anderson
Bayard Rustin
Troubles I've Seen

HarperCollins, 359 pp., \$30

Sixties—a national hero. He had fairly early on been to India, too late to meet his hero Gandhi but in time to have become a trained disciple of Gandhi's *satyagraha*, nonviolent civil disobedience. And largely as a result of Bayard's influence and instruction, *satyagraha* would become the technique of choice for the successful defeat of legalized racial segregation in the South.

Among those Bayard tutored in the methods of nonviolent resistance were a young minister named Martin Luther King, Jr. and a group of black kids, led by one Stokely Carmichael, who constituted themselves the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

From the publicity point of view, of course, Bayard's highest achievement was as the organizer of the great March on Washington of August 1963, a feat he pulled off brilliantly despite terrible constraints of time

and manpower and in the teeth of the fears of many established civil-rights leaders that not enough people would show up and that those who did would cause trouble. That march, of course, not only turned out to be a success beyond everyone's, including Bayard's, highest hopes but became a kind of pivotal moment in American history.

During all this time, Bayard was also traveling back and forth to Africa a good deal. In addition to becoming a leading collector and connoisseur of African art, he was engaged in an effort to teach democratic principles to various independence movements and their leaders. (Perhaps preeminent among these were two who appear to have flunked the course—Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, whose governments, once in power, could have brought Bayard very little in the way either of satisfaction or hope.)

After the defeat of Jim Crow, Bayard decided that it was time to get beyond the old civil-rights tactics. He sought to build a coalition with the labor movement and the white working poor in order to tackle the next, and far greater, need of the black community, which was for economic opportunity. The decision to move, in his words, "from protest to politics" would set him at odds with many if not most of his old civil-rights comrades, very much including SNCC, who were ever more militantly (and ironically) embarked on a

course of separatism. Similarly, his advocacy of a negotiated settlement to the Vietnam War became a stumbling-block to his relations with many if not most of his old friends in the peace movement, who were far from dismayed by the prospect of a North Vietnamese victory. And finally, in both spiritual and practical keeping with all of the foregoing, he became passionately engaged in international human-rights work, traveling, for instance, to take food and medicine to the refugees imprisoned at the Thai-Cambodian border. All in all, a rich and fruitful life, full of purpose, and much (and much-deserved) honor.

Jervis Anderson seems, like a good paleontologist, to have put the skeleton together. But what he was afraid, or because of timidity incapable, of dealing with was the fact that Bayard was a rogue, full of appetite and mischief—as men too large of spirit to be contained by any “role” often are. And who can tell where such largeness comes from? Perhaps in his case it came from knowing things about life that most of the people his political commitments put in his way—pacifists, civil-rights activists, social democrats, and trade-union leaders—did not. He was a man, for instance, who spent his childhood thinking that his grandparents were his parents and that the girl who was in fact his mother was his elder sister. He was a homosexual, once caught *in flagrante* and sent to jail for it, and thus was always considered a potential embarrassment to the causes he served (hard as such an idea might nowadays be to credit). He spoke with an odd affectation, which several interviewees in the book refer to

quite mistakenly as an “English accent” but was more like a signal of his never-to-be-abandoned apartness. Moreover, his truest tastes, for music, art, and finery along with carousing and laughter, by themselves were bound to provide him with a more complex sense of the good and true than were to be found in his political commitments, however wide-ranging and humane.

Whatever the reason for it, in any undertaking or discussion, no matter



Chas Fagan

how close to his heart, Bayard stood always at his own oblique angle, sniffing and ready to disrupt. Sometimes these disruptions would be simply restorative of sanity. How many times during the kind of political discussions where the air grew dark with confusion and cross-purposes did Bayard, ever the participant/outsider, manage in a few short sentences to impose his own clarity? How many times was incipient ugliness—in quarrels particularly between blacks and Jews—averted by

his way of standing outside and changing the subject?

But Bayard’s capacity for disruption was hardly confined to such noble purposes. Anyone who really knew him knew that he was bound sooner or later, in one way or another, to slip the bonds of dignity. It seems that either the friends of Bayard interviewed for this book were too pious to discuss this aspect of his subject with Jervis Anderson, or he was too pious to discuss it with his readers. Whatever the case, piety was, and is, too prissy, too mingy an attitude to take toward his memory. Bayard himself hated the prissy—prissy people and prissy ideas. He drank too much and smoked too much and simply could not stand to be proper for too long.

Once, when I was with him in Israel during the summer, he responded to the warning of an Israeli that in the desert heat it was imperative to drink great quantities of water with a W.C. Fields-like expression of outrage at the very idea that anyone should suggest he drink water. It was then explained to the already bewildered Israeli that in America this man was a great leader of his people and a great credit to his race.

Bayard loved scenes like that and took every opportunity to create them. On another occasion, on a flight from Madrid to New York, he spent the entire trip throwing spitballs at me. As with the Israeli, an already bewildered stewardess was informed that this particular passenger happened to be a great civil-rights leader.

Moreover, the older he got, the more liberated—probably because the appearance of decorum once required by the civil-rights movement had been lifted from him. On his 60th birthday he declared, “Baby,

sixty is marvelous!" And on his 75th, he confided to me that what he wanted engraved on his tombstone was "This nigger had fun!"

In other words, Bayard Rustin was far bigger than the list of his accomplishments. Indeed, by the time he died most of the organized community he had served so brilliantly, along with most of the politicians subservient to that community, had, to their own great loss, turned their backs on him. Nor would the labor movement of George Meany and Lane Kirkland, in which he had

invested so much of his hope for the betterment of the black poor, survive him by very many years, but would instead be taken over by his enemies, labor's mischievous left wing.

Bayard's greatest accomplishment was himself. And there has surely been far less of the world's sum of fun and saving laughter since his death. That is why one puts this book down hoping that some day before too long some close friend of Bayard's will complete the job of recording his life with a long and full and genuinely evocative memoir. ♦

Augustine. This was the incident made famous in the accounts of Voltaire and Horace Walpole as beginning the Seven Years War, the first true world war in history. The letter to his brother contains the famous reference to his baptism of fire: "I can with truth assure you, I heard Bullets whistle and believe me there was something charming in the sound." The letter somehow got into print and excited a snort from the battle-weary George II: "By God, the fellow cannot have heard many if he thinks them charming!"



INSIDE WASHINGTON

A Splendid Collection of Everything He Wrote

By Paul Johnson

This handsome book is the most extensive collection of George Washington's writings ever put together in one volume. It is the work of John Rhodehamel, curator of historical manuscripts at the Huntington Library in California. He was at one time archivist at Mount Vernon, and must surely know more about Washington than any other living soul. He provides authentic texts, a detailed chronology, useful notes, and an excellent index.

There is a feast of good reading in this volume, which takes one through Washington's life and career, virtually from start to finish. Washington was not a gifted or vivid

writer, but he was conscientious, methodical, accurate, and truthful—within the limits, that is, of what he wished to disclose.

George Washington: Writings
John Rhodehamel, ed.

Library of America, 1,149 pp., \$40

First come the "Rules of Civility & Decent Behavior," originally compiled by Jesuits in the 16th century, and often still relevant today ("When in Company, put not your Hands to any Part of the Body Not usually discovered"). The teenage Washington copied out all 110 of them, and stuck to them, on the whole, throughout his life. They helped to win him the reputation of being the best-mannered man in the Republic, at least in a formal sense.

Then there are the daily records of his frontier experiences in the 1740s and 1750s, a good deal about wampum and scalping, and touching records of Indian pow-wows. They include two accounts of his crucial battle with the French in May 1754, one to Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia, the other to his brother John

Washington's letters are never in the least literary, but they are usually interesting because they deal with practical matters in a straightforward way. Indeed it is hard to think of any book which takes one more immediately and closely into the world of the 18th century. There is, for instance, his "Memorandum to have my Coat made by the following Directions." Washington was not, I think, a vain man, but he was a careful and fastidious dresser, and his instructions to his tailor were full and very specific. There is an enormous amount about the Mount Vernon estate and its products: Washington was a conscientious and in some respects innovative producer of tobacco, and his letters to his agents are full of fascinating business lore.

As a large-scale planter Washington owned, sold, bought, and dealt with slaves all his life. Like virtually every other civilized Virginian gentleman of his day, he deplored slavery and wished to be rid of it, but could not quite see how. A sad letter of 1761 offers "Forty Shillings Reward, besides what the Law allows" for the recovery of his four slaves, Perod, Jack, Neptune, and Cupid, who "went off without the least suspicion, Provocation or difference with any Body." An even sadder one was delivered, sealed, by his "Negro Tom," to an agent, with instructions to sell him "for whatever he will fetch" in

Paul Johnson has just completed A History of the American People, which will be published by HarperCollins early in 1998. His latest historical work is The Birth of the Modern: World Society 1815-1830.

“any of the Islands” (the West Indies, presumably), and in return to send molasses, rum, “lymes,” tamarinds and sweetmeats for his stepchildren. Washington admits that “this Fellow is a Rogue and a Runaway,” but claims he is “exceedingly healthy, strong and good at the Hoe,” and ought to sell well “if kept clean & trimm’d up a little.”

On the other hand, Washington was never content to accept the permanence of slavery. A written fragment he left just before he became president shows that his plan was “To make the Adults among them as easy & as comfortable in the circumstances as their state of ignorance & improvidence would admit; & to lay a foundation to prepare the rising generation for a destiny different from that in which they were born.” Nothing came of it, needless to say, but one gets the feeling Washington’s hatred of slavery and anxiety to do something about it was much less superficial than similar noises made by Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and other Virginia gentlemen. The very detailed provisions about the manumission of his slaves which he laid down in his last will and testament (here reproduced in full, with a schedule of his possessions), and his solemn, almost threatening requests to his executors to be sure to carry them out in full, contrast nobly with the behavior of Jefferson, who left his affairs in such a mess that there was no alternative but to sell his slaves separately for the highest prices they would fetch, thus breaking up their families. One gets the impression, from all the patriarch’s writings, that he always sought to be just.

Just, yes; and practical. There was no sentiment about him whatsoever, or if there was he never let it show. When he wrote a long letter to his sister on the death of their mother, it contained ten lines of perfunctory remarks about his feelings and 116 lines on the steps to be taken for the winding up of her estate, all good, sound, sensible stuff. (He was then

president and could not carry out such duties in person.)

What was going on inside Washington’s head, and still more inside his heart, no one ever knew at the time—or since. When he does expose his feelings it is by accident. Thus, there is a splendid riposte to a land-grabber who apparently addressed an abusive letter, while “liquored up,” to the great man, and received a suitable reply, referring to his “impertinence, stupidity & sottishness.” Sometimes it is possible to read between the lines the pressure of feeling, as when he wrote to his wife Martha (“My dear Patcy”) on taking up the awesome command as general of the revolutionary forces. But the mask is usually not allowed to slip at all, and never completely.

After all, if Washington had given away to his feelings, could he have been so effective, either as general of an amateur army fighting, with wholly inadequate resources, a professional foe, or as the chief executive of a new nation, trying to push and pull and keep it together? It was America’s great fortune to find such a man,

equally practical, persistent, and sensible in war as in peace. The theme of all his government letters—easily the best are to Alexander Hamilton, to whom he could open his heart more than most—is the need for adequate provision: If Congress will the end, it must will the means, too. And accompanying it is the need for a strong, though limited, central authority, which the original articles of government did not supply at all and which even the eventual Constitution barely satisfied. These letters and other writings—the rough notes for his First Inaugural are of great interest—are an education in early American constitutional history.

They culminate in his Farewell Address, which he compiled with help from Hamilton’s ready pen but which nonetheless bears the stamp of Washington’s own solidity, dignity, and wisdom in every line. It is one of America’s greatest state papers and used to be read out every year in Congress, until, in the chaos that followed the media *putsch* we call Watergate, the practice was abandoned. Anyone who studies this admirable collection will wish to see it reinstated. ♦



GARMENT’S DISTRICT

A Washington Autobiography of Striking Honesty

By Jennifer Grossman

Among the stranger intimacies recounted by Leonard Garment in his autobiography *Crazy Rhythm* are the dead-of-the-night telephone calls he regularly received from Richard Nixon in the closing weeks of

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the 1968 presidential campaign. These monologues were “a procession of sad and lonely thoughts, mingling past and present, that needed to be expressed, not necessarily heard.”

Nixon’s voice would “gradually grow less clear, slower, indistinct, and finally end, often in midsentence. There would be silence. And then a dial tone.”

Was Nixon drinking? Was he cracking up? Twenty-five years later, over dinner with former Nixon aide John Ehrlichman, Garment solved the mystery: At the end of a wired day on the trail, Ehrlichman said, Nixon would be plagued by both exhaustion and insomnia. The antidote “was a Seconal, a stiff drink, and a phone call to me.” In other words, Garment put the man to sleep.

Crazy Rhythm will not have the same narcotic effect on readers. Although Garment has no sullied reputation to redeem, no political scores to settle, no bombshells to drop, and no ideological point to drive home, there is a quirky charm to this nebbishy and neurotic narrative. Garment modestly describes himself as “slightly out of touch,” and “always a peripheral character in the whirling dramas of the Nixon years”—a pleasing contrast to such recent exercises in self-promotion as Dick Morris’s memoirs, or Ed Rollins’s.

Garment has three stories to tell in *Crazy Rhythm*. The first is of his career: Raised in Brooklyn, he studied at Brooklyn Law School and entered politics as a “birthright Democrat,” but ended up advising Nixon in the darkest hour of his presidency. He persuaded Gerald Ford to pardon his predecessor, defended Israel in the U.N. with Pat Moynihan, defended embattled national security adviser Robert McFarlane during the Iran-Contra hearings, and nearly “went crazy” defending Robert Bork against “the dirtiest opposition campaign in Supreme Court history” in 1987.

The second story is that of Richard Nixon. Garment was his law partner in the early 1960s, played a role in resurrecting him as the “New Nixon,” and served as Nixon’s counsel after April 1973. Although Gar-

ment’s involvement in Watergate was fairly noncontroversial, *Crazy Rhythm* does revisit Garment’s impassioned arguments against destroying the tapes—advice Nixon followed to his everlasting regret. Twenty years later, Garment regrets it, too. Had he had it to do over, he



says, he would have said, “Just do it.”

But it is the third, more confessional, story—of Garment’s struggle with depression, of his wrestling with questions of assimilation and Jewish identity, and of his tragic first marriage—that makes *Crazy Rhythm* so captivating.

In most Great Men books, the wives are disposed of in a line or two in the acknowledgments. Garment does not have this option. The story

of his first wife, Grace, is clearly painful to tell. After years of paralyzing depression, endless therapy, and amphetamine overdoses, Grace Garment took a train to Boston, checked into a hotel under an assumed name, and slit her wrists in a bathtub. Another author might have collapsed this experience into a few isolated cameos. Garment is unwilling to let himself off that easily. “And where was I during the years of Grace’s downward spiral?” he asks. Twenty years later, he courageously writes that he is still groping for the answer.

Garment’s introspective honesty is the mixed reward of his immersion in psychoanalysis. He recounts various therapeutic attempts to bid his mother back from a “long psychotic holiday,” his own phobic disorders and treatment after the brutality of boot camp, Grace’s diagnosis as “anhedonic,” as well as the chore of “ferrying [his children] to their own psychiatrists.”

And although the inner contours of Nixon’s soul are hardly uncharted territory, Garment’s psychiatric lens provides a singular perspective. He traces Nixon’s trauma over firing Haldeman and Ehrlichman to his earlier loss of his two brothers, Arthur and Harold. And he thinks Nixon ultimately chose to preserve the Watergate tapes not for the reasons pressed by his advisers, but because destroying them “would have been something like an act of self-mutilation.” Likening the tapes to the “Rosebud” sled in *Citizen Kane*, Garment ventures that the tapes represented “a kind of personal immortality” for Nixon. Elsewhere, he sums up his affinity for Nixon as due to their both being “social immigrants, on the margins of polite society,” alienated, uneasy, “adapting inner need to outer circumstance.”

It is from this vantage point that Garment probes one of the more disturbing questions of the Nixon legend: the charges of anti-Semitism. Those looking for a clear verdict will be disappointed. Garment writes:

Show me a Christian or for that matter a Jew who does not have some traces of anti-Semitism in his or her soul, [and] I will show you a human being whose body contains no germs. If you build from these considerations an anti-Semitism continuum running from 1 to 100, my personal experience would put Nixon somewhere between 15 and 20—better than most, worse than some, much like the rest of the world.

While one can appreciate the attempted nuance, the formula is unsatisfying. A stronger defense comes with Garment's account of Nixon's decisiveness during the Yom Kippur War. With Watergate raging, Nixon angrily told his hand-wringing advisers to "send [Israel] everything that can fly." Golda Meir would

later say that "Israel never had a better friend" in the White House. And Garment informs us that a reference to "Jew boys" attributed to Nixon by the *New York Times* in 1973 was actually the misattribution of a John Dean remark about "Jewish boys." (The *Times* never corrected the record.)

For all his revelations, there is one area where Garment remains disappointingly oblique, and that is on the question of what he believes. Throughout, we catch only the most fleeting glimpses of his ideology, which never takes more shape than "a general sympathy for the underdog."

Despite his Democratic roots, Garment says he "couldn't have cared less that Richard Nixon was the political Antichrist of eastern liberalism." For him, Nixon was "an opening to a different life and the possibility of salvation." As well as being perhaps the biggest underdog of all. ♦

nist government, under the inspiration of Mao Tse-tung. In *Hungry Ghosts*, the British sinologist Jasper Becker has finally set out these facts for a general readership.

Even the bare statistics of the famine make harrowing reading. Children suffered especially, not only in the famine itself but in later years, dying from the after-effects of severe malnutrition. In 1957 half of all Chinese who died were under 18; in 1963 half were under 10. These were not the most unfortunate. In the extremity of mass starvation, when rats and insects had long gone and the very bark from the trees had been consumed, peasants resorted to the ghastly custom of *yi zi er shi*—"swap children, then eat." Since no one could bear to eat his own children, you exchanged with a neighbor. Then you ate his, he ate yours.

The immediate cause of the famine was the policy of stripping peasants of their property and herding them into communes. Mao, by this time sunk deep in megalomania, "knew" that this was the way to agricultural success. His subordinates flattered him with reports—entirely fictitious—of bumper harvests. Local officials, fearful of being denounced as "rightists," vied with each other to supply Beijing with dazzling—but equally fictitious—statistics for grain production.

Reasonably enough, Beijing asked for its portion, to feed the cities and export to "fraternal socialist" countries. (Grain exports continued throughout the famine.) Since that portion was often larger than the entire crop, everything was taken, and the peasants starved. When even the state portion could not be found, peasants were accused of concealing grain, and thousands were killed, often after grisly tortures, in an effort to make them reveal their hiding places. Thus, one casualty of Becker's book is the notion that China's was a "peasant revolution," different in



WHO CHINA LOST

Mao's 30 Million Dead

By John Derbyshire

The largest human calamity of our century—larger than the Holocaust, larger than the Stalinist Great Terror—was the famine that swept China in the "three bad years" from 1959 to 1961.

At least 30 million died. For a long time the Chinese authorities and their Western sympathizers denied that there had been a famine at all. As

evidence of the catastrophe accumulated, they fell back on grudging admissions of "severe shortages" caused by "natural disasters" and "adverse climatic conditions."

In the early 1980s, researchers in the West (and a few brave Chinese) began probing Chinese population statistics. The results of those inquiries are now in, the conclusions incontrovertible. There were no natural disasters in the relevant years, and the climate was mild. The famine was caused by the policies of the Chinese Commu-

Jasper Becker
Hungry Ghosts
Mao's Secret Famine

Free Press, 352 pp., \$25

John Derbyshire is the author of Seeing Calvin Coolidge in a Dream (St. Martin's Press).

kind from Russia's. In fact the pattern of the disaster—communization, forced requisition, mass starvation—runs strikingly parallel to that of Stalin's famine in the Ukraine thirty years earlier.

Mao's affection for the peasants was entirely theoretical. Like practically all the Chinese Communist leaders, Mao was a middle-class radical. There is no evidence he ever did so much as an hour of field work. (Similarly, Lenin never set foot inside a factory.) When the behavior of the peasants—in particular, their devotion to private property—failed to agree with Mao's theories, he turned against them with terrible ferocity.

The only senior Communist openly to protest Mao's policies was Marshal Peng Dehuai, who was also the only senior leader of a genuinely peasant background. Peng was swiftly purged from the armed forces. Later he was jailed and tortured to death. With opposition thus silenced, the disastrous policies might have continued indefinitely.

The army, however, was getting restless. Most soldiers came from the countryside. When they began to get news that their families had starved to death there were discipline problems. The leadership split, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping heading up a reformist faction bent on weakening the commune system and reintroducing private farming. Of course, this diluted Mao's authority. He was even obliged to make a self-criticism of sorts—in which he nonetheless managed to imply that the "mistakes" were everyone's fault but his own.

Mao never forgave this humiliation. Five years later he launched the Cultural Revolution. Becker asserts that this upheaval, which plunged

China into eleven years of chaos, was nothing more than a purge of those who had been responsible for ending the famine. Most historians of the period would, I think, agree that there was more to the Cultural Revolution than just factional revenge—but certainly the reformers were early victims. Liu Shaoqi was murdered, and Deng Xiaoping exiled to the countryside. Those who had been cruelest in persecuting the peasants were promoted, or honorably retired.

Becker tells of a reporter in China in the 1920s responding to a request from his editor for "the bottom facts." His reply: "There is no bottom in China, and no facts." Now we have a new generation of China gulls, reporting back breathlessly to us about China's "opening" and

"commercialization." Meanwhile, a correspondent of mine in North China, in a letter smuggled out by an émigré (no Chinese person would be such a fool as to trust the postal service) writes of coal miners unpaid for six months, enterprises looted by the sons and daughters of Party officials as soon as they become profitable, and scholars jailed for "embezzlement" and "counter-revolutionary activity."

There are lessons we can learn from the appalling tragedy of China's famine, the most depressing of which, for those of us who set ourselves up as knowledgeable about China, is that nobody ever understands the true current state of affairs in that vast, autistic world-in-a-world.

Thirty million dead—and nobody knew! ♦

HOUSE OF CORRECTION

The Masterful Return of Jonathan Reynolds

By John Podhoretz

Walking almost anywhere in Manhattan south of Harlem these days is a humbling experience for anyone who fancies himself a keen-eyed observer, because who on earth could have guessed five years ago what a glorious transformation was

in store for the place? Even at its worst, New York City fairly burst with life, but Manhattan is *clean* now, for God's sake. It feels *safe*. The city that for 30 years represented everything that had gone wrong in America has suddenly become a textbook example of how quickly things can be righted if solid good sense is applied.

The salvation of New York City these past few years is such an extraordinary and unanticipated event that it will take a decade or more before we can really appreciate the effect it is having on the nation's cultural life. It is, as the Stalinists used to say, no accident that the artistic decadence of our time has been accompanied by the physical and civil decay that beset America's cultural capital.

Nowhere is the city's renaissance more evident than in the theater, both on and off-Broadway. For the first time in memory there are dozens of things to see—an old-fashioned crowd-pleaser called *The Last Night of Ballyhoo* is the latest to open—and there are dozens of promising offerings waiting in the wings, from flashy musicals like *Steel Pier* to a delightful

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New York

little show I saw in New Haven a few weeks ago called *The Triumph of Love*.

This is a significant development because there cannot be a healthy American theater without a healthy

—THEATER DIARY—

Jonathan Reynolds
Stonewall Jackson's House
The American Place Theatre (New York)

New York. This statement may not sound controversial, but it is contrary to every piece of theatrical propaganda foisted on

the American people for three decades now. In 1965, the creation of the National Endowment for the Arts led to the so-called regional-theater boom; because there was available money, hundreds of venues opened up across the country. Indeed, never before in the history of any nation had any high art form been so democratized. The result is that there are now hundreds of theaters and festivals dedicated to the staging of new plays and revivals of great old plays. Sounds wonderful, no?

No. The regional theaters have, it is true, been a godsend for movie and television producers, for whom they are a federally subsidized farm team where young performers make their bones and get an agent before moving on to the big money. They have also led to employment in the thrilling profession of arts administration. But for the rest of us and for the theater in general, the story is rather more ambiguous. The growth of regional theater—deriving as it has from government money administered by backscratching panels at the federal, state, and local levels—has led to the nationwide imposition of a stifling cultural orthodoxy about

what constitutes a good or important piece of theater.

The orthodoxy is so cliché-riddled by now that a list of its acceptable topics reads like a right-wing parody: racism and its parlous impact; homophobia and its parlous impact; capitalism and its parlous impact; the bourgeois family and its parlous impact. And for an author who might actually have something interesting or original to say, such hard-and-fast rules of playmaking can destroy the creative impulse outright.

That may well have been the case for Jonathan Reynolds, who, in two works from the late 1970s and early 1980s, gave every sign of being the most talented American playwright of his generation. One was a brilliant and sustained existential monologue called *Yanks 3 Detroit 0 Top of the Seventh*, about the agonies of an aging baseball pitcher in the midst of the almost impossible accomplishment of a perfect game. The other was a full-length, multi-character comedy called *Geniuses*, which I saw in 1983 and which remains the best contemporary American play I have seen in 25 years of theatergoing.

Set in the Philippines during and after a typhoon, *Geniuses* is nominally about a team of male screenwriters working on an American film epic (Reynolds worked on Francis Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*) trapped together in a bungalow with an ingenue whose presence sets off a series of sexual rivalries between them. *Geniuses* takes off so imaginatively in so many directions, from a hilariously incisive dissection of the Hemingway-obsessed writers of an older generation to the deal-making acumen of the supposedly dumb Hollywood blonde, that it is not surprising the play has never received the attention it deserves. Reynolds established themes and situations later used to lesser effect by the better-known David Mamet and David Rabe in *Speed-the-Plow* and *Hurly Burly*, respectively. *Geniuses* is not only the best play ever written about Holly-

wood—it may be the best piece of American writing about Hollywood altogether.

After *Geniuses*, Reynolds disappeared from the American theater, working on screenplays for indifferent comedies. Had he been lured from his true calling by the corrupt world he had so tellingly portrayed in his masterpiece? Apparently not, for judging by an astonishing new play called *Stonewall Jackson's House* that is playing in a tiny theater five levels below the street just off Times Square, Reynolds was driven away from the theater by what George Orwell would have called its “smelly little orthodoxies.”

Written in what seems like white heat, *Stonewall Jackson's House* is an inventive piece of political theater, but for the first 15 minutes, you are tempted to walk out in a huff. It begins with a black tour guide named LaWanda showing two couples—one Alabama white-trash bait salesman, the other kindly Ohio farmers—through the plantation of the eponymous confederate general. The characters are poorly drawn caricatures, the writing wretched. LaWanda, we discover, is a 23-year-old crackhead so desperate to lead a better life that she decides she would be better off as a slave owned by the kindly Ohioans—as do the white-trash couple.

At this point, the lights go dark, and it turns out that what we have been watching is a play-within-a-play—a manuscript for a play, that is, which has been submitted for consideration to a regional theater company planning its upcoming season. And for the next 90 minutes, we watch characters argue about what we have just seen.

Oz, the company's artistic director, wants to stage the play; he thinks it provocative. Helen, his actress-wife, is appalled by his opinion, not least because the lead part is one she cannot play because she is white. A young black woman named Tracy, the company's assistant director, declares it racist. Helen objects again:

“I,” she says with a dramatic pause, “am a Jew,” which is supposed to be self-explanatory.

The play's author, a young white man named Joe, defends it as a portrait of shattered lives desperate for direction and control. It can't be racist, he says, because both the white-trash couple and the black tour guide want to become slaves. Amazingly, nobody objects to the thing because it's lousy. Finally, it becomes clear to Oz that the play is unproducible because it was written by a white man. If it were the work of an



A TOUR GUIDE EXPLAINS THAT THE CIVIL WAR RESULTED FROM LOW MALE SELF-ESTEEM.

African-American, then at least there would be some protection from the charge of racism. And so, as the first act closes, Reynolds springs another surprise: The play was written by someone black. In fact, it was written by Tracy, the black assistant director whom we just heard condemning it for its racism. Joe, it turns out, is an actor she hired.

In Act Two, to paraphrase Snoopy, Reynolds ties it all together. Tracy is a black conservative and her play is intended to be an indictment of the welfare system that, she says, has kept blacks in servitude just as surely as slavery did. She blasts Oz and Helen for being Upper West Side liberals who don't understand how paternalistic their views are. After a time, every single character on stage launches into a speech about how he or she has been victimized.

Tracy cannot prevail; not only are her views unacceptable for staging, but Helen decides Tracy must be driven from the theater altogether. Terrified of losing her place, she finally

agrees to change the play. And in a scene directly parallel to the one with which Reynolds began, Tracy's play is turned into the tale of a young black male tour guide named LaWaldo (played, in a stroke of gender- and race-neutral casting, by Helen) who praises Mrs. Stonewall Jackson for managing to survive her husband's repeated acts of date rape and explains that the Civil War resulted from low male self-esteem. It wins the Pulitzer.

Reynolds may be trying to do too much here by mixing a highly literate political argument about affirmative action with a parody of bad modern theater, though structurally he is up to something ingenious. And while some of Tracy's arguments seem rather didactic, God knows George Bernard Shaw can get pretty didactic as well. Indeed, Tracy so burns with conviction that she does put one in mind of Shaw's great anti-capitalist heroine Major Barbara. And rather like Shaw, who gave the best lines in *Major Barbara* to his villain, Andrew Undershaft, Reynolds does put good counterarguments in the mouths of Tracy's interrogators.

In truth, I don't really know what to think of *Stonewall Jackson's House* because I still can't quite believe I saw it with my own eyes. It is the first politically conservative (or neo-conservative) American play of my lifetime, and its author is a writer for whom I had immense respect 15 years before I knew he was an ideological compatriot. One thing is for sure: Of all the signs of cultural vitality New York's renaissance has shown of late, the fact that the American Place Theatre would actually stage *Stonewall Jackson's House* is the most unexpected and the most hopeful. And the fact that it has received favorable notices from both the *New York Times* and the *Village Voice* I can't think very much about, because the cognitive dissonance will be so intense I fear it will lead to nervous collapse. ♦

