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ANTHONY LEWIS:
THE CASE FOR IMPEACHMENT
DAVID FRUM

Hillary Clinton and the Crisis of Feminism

by Noemie Emery

the weekly Standard

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AP Photo/Greg Gibson

Books & Arts

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Springtime for Saddam?

Bill Clinton was taken to the cleaners by Saddam Hussein last week—to the surprise of practically no one. But there *were* surprising reactions to the Clinton administration's failure to use military force against Saddam, and its decision to reward him for agreeing to inspections he was already obligated to permit.

The good news is that several members of the Senate, Democrats and Republicans, were willing to come to grips with Saddam's drive to produce weapons of mass destruction. As U.N. secretary general Kofi Annan schmoozed with Saddam in Baghdad, Democratic senator John Kerry of Massachusetts and Republican John McCain of Arizona made a coherent case on ABC's *This Week* for removing Saddam rather than making concessions to him. Kerry, in particular, didn't balk even at the prospect of sending American ground troops to the Persian Gulf, if that's what it takes.

Perhaps inspired by their example, Senate majority leader Trent Lott punched holes in the Annan-Clinton-Saddam deal once it was announced. Democrat Bob Kerrey of Nebraska joined in, as did Republicans John Ashcroft of Missouri and Ben Nighthorse Campbell of Colorado. By the end of the week, key senators from both parties were talking seriously, for the first time, about a congressional role in reshaping U.S. policy toward Saddam.

Even inside the administration, voices of dissent peeped out, most notably that of U.N. ambassador Bill Richardson. Having opposed the Annan trip to Baghdad in the first place, Richardson made his lack of enthusiasm for the deal plain to anyone who talked to him privately. "Not much," he said when asked by one inquisitor what he thought of the agreement. Then, he proceeded to note the gaping loopholes in it.

On the other hand, there was Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, who had talked tough but turned out to be the squishiest member of Clinton's team—and who did a notably poor job of defending the deal before Congress. But Albright—and Annan, for that matter—were not nearly as squishy as Jack Kemp. The day the deal was struck, the 1996 Republican veep candidate told the L.A. World Affairs Council that "the entire Arab world and the entire Islamic world of 1.4 billion people may very well take [a] bombing campaign as a sure sign the United States will use its supreme power petulantly to crush anyone who refuses our dictates." As Kemp put it, the source of the conflict seemed to lie in "ill-considered" American "dictates."

These kind words for Saddam were merely the follow-on to Kemp's extraordinary venture in freelance diplomacy two weeks earlier. On Feb. 11, he met secretly in New York with Iraqi U.N. ambassador Nizar Hamdoon. Ramsey Clark-like, Kemp tried to make himself an intermediary between an enemy of the United States and the U.S. government, promoting his peace initiative to both sides. One wonders what Kemp's tough-minded colleagues at Empower America, like Jeane Kirkpatrick and William Bennett, think of the propriety of a private citizen's negotiating with an agent of a hostile foreign power at such a sensitive moment.

News the White House Can Use

Page 36 of the February 23 issue of *U.S. News and World Report* contains what must be the most vicious paragraph to appear in a news magazine this year. In 1957, *U.S. News* reports, Lucianne Goldberg, otherwise known as Linda Tripp's literary agent, became pregnant out of wedlock. "According to several friends," says the magazine, "she told people the baby was stillborn." Forty-one years later, *U.S. News* has learned differently: "records show that she put the child up for adoption."

What could this possibly have to do with President Clinton or Monica Lewinsky? Elise Ackerman, the reporter who wrote the piece, says she finds the fact of Goldberg's adopted child "very pertinent," though she refuses to say what it is pertinent to. Ackerman's editor, former Clinton administration official Steve Waldman, describes the Goldberg profile as "an important story of national significance," though he will not reveal what about it is important or significant. He does say that he is "not at all uncomfortable" about the effect the story may have had on the Goldberg family. And it has had an effect. "It was all news to me," says Goldberg's son, Jonah, who learned about his half-brother for the first time in *U.S. News*. "And it was a crappy place to find out."

A Shot and a Scold

The Nykesha Sales controversy took an ugly turn at the end of last week when one of the participants dared—ye gods!—to say something true. As most sports fans and even many non-sports fans now know, Nykesha was the star scorer on the University of Connecticut's women's basketball team. An injury had sidelined her just as she was one point shy of breaking the school's

Scrapbook

career scoring record. In collusion with the Big East commissioner, game officials, and an opposing coach, U. Conn's coach arranged for Nykesha to hobble down the court against Villanova and score an uncontested two points, thus ensuring her place in the school's record books.

Isn't that sweet? Isn't that appalling? Opinion is divided. But the real opprobrium seems reserved for Big East commissioner Mike Tranghese, who let slip he would never have approved the plan if a men's coach had requested it. "Men compete, get along, and move on with few emotions," the knuckle-dragging Tranghese said. "But women break down, get emotional. . . . When I have a situation involving females, I try to look at it with more sensitivity." For saying what everybody knows to be true, Tranghese will be pilloried. Already by Friday he was getting scolded in the *New York Times*; he is probably in for much worse. These are dangerous times in which to be "sensitive."

Lights? Camera? Action?

If—or perhaps when—Mike Tranghese begins looking for a new job, he might move to England and try the BBC, where sensitivity has been taken to lengths that even women's basketball hasn't yet considered. Earlier this month, a young man called Damon Rose was awarded a prized position with BBC-TV. He won out over 350 other applicants for two years of training to become a television director.

Did we mention that Damon Rose is blind?

As one veteran TV director put it, with typical Brit understatement: "I think doing this when you're blind will pose a problem."

DiFi Returns

The Scrapbook is pleased to dust off the Dianne Feinstein Moral-Equivalence Award, named for the California senator who last year compared China's Tiananmen Square massacre to the 1970 Kent State tragedy. The first winners of 1998: DiFi herself (again) along with Minnesota Republican senator Rod Grams. The two of them teamed up last week to block an anodyne, non-binding sense of the Senate resolution calling on President Clinton to introduce, and take all necessary measures to pass, a resolution at the U.N. Committee on Human Rights meeting in Geneva criticizing China for its human rights abuses. The resolution, proposed by senators Connie Mack, a conservative Republican, and Paul Wellstone, a liberal Democrat, was so uncontroversial that it was set to pass the Senate unanimously, until Feinstein and Grams blocked it. Now, it will have to go through the Foreign Relations Committee, of which Grams is a member. He may be able to tie it up there as well. Meanwhile, Feinstein reportedly wants language to be included in the resolution acknowledging the State Department's claims that there's been an improvement in China's human-rights climate.

Let's You and Him Fight

The Feb. 23 *Le Figaro*, summarizing a survey of French opinion on Iraq, perfectly crystallized a century of Gallic strategic thinking: "Oui à une intervention militaire, mais sans la France." Or, as it would appear in the subtitles: "Yes to military intervention, but without French participation." *Parfait*!

Casual

Sandy Hume, 1969-1998

By last week, my friend Sandy Hume had become, at age 28, the hottest new reporter in Washington. He had single-handedly turned the *Hill* newspaper into must reading. Sandy broke the major congressional story of 1997—that of the House Republicans' botched coup against Newt Gingrich. This was only a small corner of what he was working on. But it was enough to lead to freelance work at the *New Republic*, *George*, and the *Texas Monthly*. It led, about a month ago, to Sandy's taking up a regular spot as a political analyst on Fox, and a prospect nearly as tempting from ABC. Sandy was being courted by *U.S. News* and this magazine. On Friday, after Sandy came by the office, we walked out onto 17th Street, smoked a few cigarettes, and ran through our repertoire of reliably funny jokes about old friends. Sandy promised he would call over the weekend.

And last Sunday, Sandy killed himself.

Sandy came to Washington as an intern at the *American Spectator* six years ago, fresh out of Middlebury. He had all the attributes of a natural cad—extreme handsomeness of the rugged type, a sense of the ridiculous, and a quick wit that was a marvel. (Of one particularly un-shut-upable woman, he once whispered, "She seems to have been electrocuted on the security fence of her narrative.")

But Sandy's virtues weren't accompanied by the usual corresponding vices. He was informal—but with perfect manners; manly—but without aggressiveness; jockish (all-conference in lacrosse)—but without the jock's cavalier indifference to others' feelings. At the *Spectator*, editor Wlady Pleszczynski and I used to think that Sandy's greatest strength was a modesty, even humility, that extended to every facet of his character. Sandy read a lot, heard a lot, knew a lot, but, rare among Washingtonians, he was always more interested in what he *didn't* know than in what he did. This made him questing, curious, honest, and, above all, diligent. He was well-connected and well-liked enough to have coasted into a number of jobs that would have kept him in Washington with a minimum of effort and a maximum of recreation. Sandy didn't do that. Instead, he decided to teach himself the reporter's trade the grueling, inglorious, lonely—and *only*—way: by covering fires and zoning disputes and two-bit court cases for a small-town paper in rural Virginia.

By the time he came back to Washington two years ago, he was a top-notch reporter. He added to his craftsmanship the key element that would eventually have made him not just a good but a great reporter: an unfeigned fascination with others. Look at the variety of people he wrote about: Christian conservatives, Ron Brown, gay-rodeo fans (the article was called, in a burst of collaborative genius, "Bum Steer"), the plutocrats in the Clinton administration, McDonald's employees spewing venom at the plutocrats in the Clinton administration, anti-Gingrich coup plotters (like Dick Armey), opponents of the anti-Gingrich coup (like Dick Armey), and so on. No wonder, once Sandy came to Capitol Hill, he was "in the backfield" on so many stories. You could safely tell Sandy things you would tell no one else.

Because Sandy, for good and bad, had a boundless capacity for empathy. He was the kind of Washington Redskins fan who mistakes the team's fortunes for his own. His autumn Sundays were a ritual of cat-and-mouse with the ushers at RFK Stadium, who were always trying to take away his flags and banners and placards, and Mondays after the 'Skins had lost were a horror.

He was a mimic who could imitate anybody: not just voices but walks, tics, posture, and subject matter. These imitations were of roll-on-the-floor hilarity, the best being his account of a boss who had hurriedly left town and called Sandy from the plane to ask him to retrieve a *stool sample* from his house.

To be with Sandy was to laugh and laugh and laugh. Viola Lee, the generally reserved owner of the China Rose restaurant where we ate daily, would run to the door to meet him. Sandy insisted on eating there every time he came back to visit. Viola never let him pay for a meal. At the Heidelberg Bakery where we went for dessert, the girls behind the counter would break their lanes (to use a special-teams metaphor Sandy would have liked) to wait on him. He was, as a friend once put it, the kind of guy who danced with wallflowers. If women were wild about Sandy, it wasn't because he was a lady's man; it was because he was a gentleman.

Sadly, Sandy always had a higher opinion of other people than he did of himself. The motto of his life could have been that throwaway line you see in a lot of book introductions: "My good points owe much to my friends; my errors are all my own." In this he showed good character and bad judgment. Now he has made a horrible mistake that has cost us beyond reckoning.

But what a friend he was. All of us who knew him had occasion to draw—and overdraw—on Sandy's generosity. Now there's no way to repay it.

Christopher Caldwell

Rewiring the Electric Industry

Irwin M. Stelzer's piece on what's at stake in the restructuring of the $200 billion electric-utility industry short-circuits the interests of two key stakeholder groups: residential and small-business customers ("Power Play," Feb. 16). While the interests of politicians, utility companies and their shareholders, power marketers, and federal and state regulators (and, to a lesser extent, environmentalists) dominate the policy debate, residential and small-business customers are in the dark about the changes in an industry that's vital to their health, safety, economic well-being, and quality of life.

As Congress takes on the challenge of unplugging the electric utilities' local monopoly franchises, deregulation should not leave in its wake defrauded and disillusioned consumers who are, after all, still reeling from the unrealized promises of deregulating the telecommunications industry. The lessons learned in the 16 states that are in various phases of reforming the electricity enterprise should guide lawmakers in their deliberations.

The delay in the roll-out of retail competition in California is a cautionary tale about what happens when politicians don't get it right, and when unsuspecting and uninformed consumers are left to the tender mercies of the free market. Deregulation has reportedly unleashed consumer fraud and false advertising.

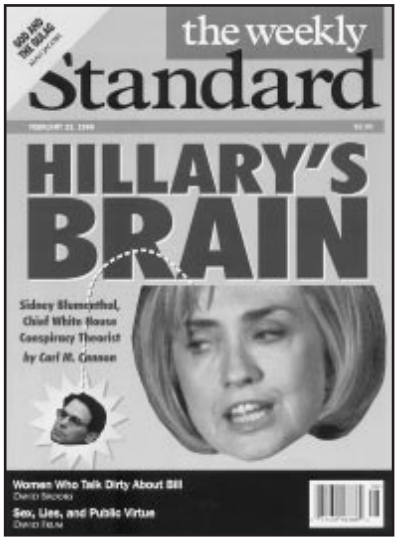
In a competitive electric-power marketplace, not all classes of customers will be equal. Industrial users, the so-called "big dogs," are already leveraging their size and power usage to negotiate lower prices and better service. It is critical that Congress move ahead carefully in order to ensure that all customers share in the benefits of deregulation, such as customer choice, new services and products, and technological innovation.

In the absence of an objective consumer-education campaign, adequate consumer safeguards, and citizen involvement, many residential and small-business customers who typically don't know a megawatt from a megamall will get the shock of their lives when they discover that their new electricity provider may not be qualified to deliver the juice. It is reasonable to expect that they will, in turn, put the squeeze on elected officials who championed retail competition, and then failed to get it right.

Milton Bins, Chairman
Faye M. Anderson, President
Douglass Policy Institute
Washington, DC

Irwin M. Stelzer is to be congratulated for a generally fair and clear overview of the advantages of electric-utility deregulation and the obstacles standing in its way.

However, he appears to accept the argument that the so-called "stranded costs" with which utilities could be



stuck under some plans are the simple residue of bad management decisions. In fact, the debts and contractual obligations that would put those utilities incurring them into a serious competitive disadvantage (if no transition period is included in a deregulation plan) are largely the fruit of decisions forced on the industry by U.S. presidents, Congress, and government regulators.

Therefore, these government-driven decisions cannot be dismissed as offhandedly as some would propose, like our friend Rep. Tom DeLay. Stranded costs are distributed very unevenly among utilities in different states, and each state tends to view them differently. Some, like New Hampshire and California, are dealing with them right now. Others are planning to do so over the next few years as they move toward deregulation.

An appreciation of what is now occurring at the state level is essential to any understanding of the future prospects for electric-utility deregulation. Congress will continue to talk about a national deregulatory regime—a sort of one-size-fits-all plan that ignores the vast differences in electric markets in various states. Meanwhile, the states are moving to solve transition problems and to give electricity customers the benefits of competition at the retail level.

Stelzer touches on this, but then seems rather cavalierly to dismiss those of us who support a state-based effort. It is quite true, as he suggests, that any real deregulation will require some congressional action. But it does not follow that Congress should have primary responsibility for coming up with a comprehensive national scheme that ignores the differences among the states. Such a federal model has not worked in countless instances over the past four decades.

It has been our position from the beginning that Congress ought to get rid of the monsters it has created—like the Tennessee Valley Authority and federal power marketing authorities. That done, Congress ought to clear away the regulatory and statutory underbrush that stands in the way of the states. And, rather than write new mandates, Congress ought to get out of the way and let the marketplace take its course.

If Congress does these things, the states will move even faster than they are moving now. And diverse paths will converge to create a national free market, with all the attendant benefits.

David A. Keene, Steven Merrill
Co-Chairmen
Craig Shirley, Consulting Director
Citizens for State Power
Alexandria, VA

Feminist Foolery

I enjoyed David Brooks's article about the outrageous things spoken in favor of Clinton by 10 women brought together by the *New York Observer* to discuss the sex scandal ("Monica Envy," Feb. 23). But I wouldn't want your readers to miss this valuable

example of feminist principle and sisterly solidarity expressed at that memorable luncheon. It's an exchange between Katie Roiphe and Francine Prose:

Roiphe: "Why did public opinion overwhelmingly support Anita Hill, whereas Monica Lewinsky nobody has any sympathy for?"

(Actually, public support didn't grow until months after the event, when Thomas had necessarily fallen silent as Hill's supporters raged on.)

Prose: "Because none of it's clean. I mean, I wanted Clarence Thomas out of there. You know, so I was willing to go with Anita Hill. Even though I thought, you know, what's the big deal about someone making a joke about pubic hair on your Coke can . . . who cares about that? Whereas I don't want Clinton out of there. So you know, bless little Monica."

Let's remember this the next time the feminists grow hot with outrage at some perceived offense.

Carol Iannone
New York, NY

Cunningham Remembered

J. Bottum's essay "America's Best Forgotten Poet" (Feb. 16) was sensitive, clear, compelling, and beautifully written. As an undergraduate at Brandeis many years ago, I took one course with J.V. Cunningham. Though not an English major, and lacking any particular aptitude for poetry or literary criticism, I found the man's erudition and uncommon eloquence absolutely riveting. It pleases me greatly that J.V. Cunningham, thanks to Bottum, is receiving at last some of the critical attention and praise he so richly deserves. I regret only that he is no longer alive to enjoy it.

Jay Bergman
New Britain, CT

I have just read with immense enjoyment J. Bottum's review of J.V. Cunningham's poetry. Upon reading it, I realized that A.E. Housman's poetry essentially is that of surging emotion. Cunningham, by contrast, is pure intellect, emotionalized by our conditioned (or perhaps inherent) response to poetic form and rhythm.

I believe Bottum's powerful and convincing review may help Cunningham receive a more respected and appropriate place in literary history.

Robert M. Davies
Wilmington, DE

Voice in the Wilderness

Alan Jacobs's review of D.M. Thomas's new biography of Alexander Solzhenitsyn is a wonderfully balanced appreciation of the life and thought of that much misunderstood (and maligned) writer ("God and the Gulag," Feb. 23). Jacobs is absolutely right that all of Solzhenitsyn's "art," whether novelistic, autobiographical, or documentary in character, entails a search for truth. Yet despite his genuine admiration for Solzhenitsyn's courageous and intransigent witness against Communist totalitarianism, Thomas cannot finally appreciate Solzhenitsyn as a writer because he shares the modernist assumption that art deals with an independent aesthetic realm, a world of idiosyncratic experience that bows before no God or Reality other than the "creativity" of the artist.

I would like to add two caveats to Jacobs's otherwise admirable review. He surely exaggerates the canonical status of Michael Scammell's 1984 biography of Solzhenitsyn. This book is marred by a complete lack of empathy as regards his deepest moral and political convictions. Scammell's biography played no small part in authorizing the legend that Solzhenitsyn is a mean-spirited anti-democrat, a political reactionary, a Russian nationalist, etc.

One of the great strengths of Thomas's biography, by contrast, is that he sets the record straight on this score. He rightly suggests that Solzhenitsyn's political sensibility is that of a Russian patriot who opposes nationalism and imperialism, an admirer of local self-government who thinks that democracy needs to be firmly rooted in a sense of "Christian responsibility and self-discipline." Thomas also refutes the tendentious claim that Solzhenitsyn is somehow an anti-Semite. In my view, Thomas's fair-minded presentation of Solzhenitsyn's political views is enough to make his book a major contribution to Solzhenitsyn scholarship.

Daniel J. Mahoney
Worcester, MA

Dems See the Blight

Like Ray Greco, I too "live in the northern tip of West Virginia" (Jay Nordlinger, Casual, Feb. 16). Everyone is a Democrat, as am I. Nonetheless, I have not spoken to one neighbor who did not consider the Clintons and their ilk a disgrace. Greco's audience must indeed be unique!

J.A. McCreary Sr.
Wellsburg, WV

My Country 'Tis of Me

William Tucker writes that I am "a one-time soldier for Lyndon LaRouche who is now Silicon Alley's unofficial press agent" ("New York City, Economic Backwater," Jan. 26). Wrong on both counts. I have never been a "soldier" for anyone or anything—other than our Constitution and the Republic for which it stands.

Mark Stahlman
New York, NY

the weekly Standard

The Wages of Sid

An independent prosecutor had been appointed to investigate a scandal engulfing the White House. But instead of doing that, this prosecutor was "deliberately going into extraneous issues," the president complained in a private memo to his chief of staff. "He cannot be allowed to get away with this," the president ordered. Every available administration surrogate must "hit him hard on the fact that as special prosecutor he is derelict in his duties in trying to conduct a partisan political vendetta."

But the president did not get the response he wanted from his underlings. So five days later, on July 12, 1973, Richard Nixon chewed out Al Haig. "Buzhardt or somebody gotta get off their ass and get up to chapter and verse" on Archibald Cox, Nixon fumed. "You know," he said, how "'We're out to get the president' and all that stuff." And "Also how they leak—how many leaks they had." Nixon could not understand why this obvious counteroffensive wasn't already underway. "Goddamnit, if I had the time, *I* could do this," he told Haig. "Do these fellows *think* of this sort of thing?"

Bill Clinton doesn't have such problems. His people think of everything. And they do it, too, as a matter of course, and constantly and everywhere and out in the open. In fact, Clinton's Ron Zieglers and Rabbi Korffs and E. Howard Hunts operate with such audacity and overdrive that American politics now smoothly responds to the rhythm of White House spin and smear. Washington is hypnotized by the spectacle, so much that it now evaluates each new outrage like an Olympic ice-dancing routine: this many points for technique, that many for presentation. Everyone forgets that what we're actually watching is organized hooliganism.

A case in point: the subpoena served by independent counsel Kenneth Starr's attorneys on the defrocked journalist and current White House hatchet man Sid Blumenthal. That subpoena sought documents and testimony relating to a whispering campaign, conducted by the usual "sources close to the president," against employees in the independent counsel's office. What might Sid Blumenthal know about such a campaign, and how might he have participated in it?

Not to worry, Mr. President; your loyalists have an answer for this question*: Ken Starr is a fascist*. First they came for Sid Blumenthal, Clinton spokesman Mike McCurry intones; "It's us today and probably you tomorrow." Blumenthal himself complains about an "assault on the First Amendment." His lawyer likens Blumenthal's grand-jury call to a move by the "Gestapo." Clinton flunkie Harold Ickes says it means we are living in a "police state, pure and simple."

This gets straight 6's from the judges. Starr's men cannot discuss grand-jury subpoenas and resulting testimony, so no formal explanation of their business with Blumenthal is available for public inspection. And in the absence of such an explanation, the world has concluded that Blumenthal is not a fair subject of independent-counsel inquiry. Sure, he may have criticized Ken Starr on the phone with reporters. But Ken Starr is open to criticism like anybody else, and Blumenthal's job is to talk with reporters. The idea that criticizing someone to a reporter might constitute an obstruction of justice seems to nearly everyone in the front-row seats, in the words of National Public Radio legal analyst Nina Totenberg, "totally wacko."

Maybe so. The Blumenthal subpoena is regrettable at least because it affords the president's defenders such an easy opportunity to direct public attention away from their own behavior. But there remain a few notable distinctions to be drawn between the unfortunate PR effects of that subpoena, on the one hand, and its legal grounding and public purpose on the other.

For one thing, it is *not* in fact Sidney Blumenthal's job to shop rumor and out-of-context info-porn about American law-enforcement officials in order to delegitimize an ongoing criminal investigation sanctioned by the courts and the U.S. Department of Justice. Sidney Blumenthal is a full-time federal employee. And the work of state we pay him six figures to do in no way includes protecting the president from the consequences of adultery, witness tampering, and suborna-

tion of perjury. Yes, he has a First Amendment right to say anything he wants about Kenneth Starr. But he has no right to say it on our dime.

Next, we should note that there is one neutral person privy to the rationale for the Blumenthal subpoena. She is chief judge Norma Holloway Johnson of the federal district court in Washington. Last Tuesday, she heard arguments from Sid Blumenthal's lawyer about why the subpoena should be quashed. Judge Johnson rejected those arguments and ordered Blumenthal to testify before the grand jury, which he did last Thursday. He didn't absolutely have to. If his attorneys thought the Johnson ruling was wrong, they could have appealed it to the federal circuit court. But they didn't. For that matter, if the White House truly believed its own propaganda that the independent counsel's office is a "Gestapo" entity, then the president could—and *should*—have ordered the attorney general to fire Ken Starr. But he didn't.

Finally, there is what the current controversy reveals, more clearly than ever before, about the character of this president's associates in their *official* capacity. It is automatic: Confronted by adversaries and asked for the truth, they have an instinct for subterfuge and stonewalling and slime. It is just like Nixon. Except that, in quantity and ferocity, it is worse. And it is not just Sid Blumenthal.

The Clintonian reaction to questions about Monica Lewinsky has smelled like a dirty trick for some weeks now. First came a tip to *U.S. New & World Report* that Linda Tripp's friend Lucianne Goldberg, according to 40-year-old divorce records, had once given a child up for adoption. Then, on Sunday, February 22, Clinton critic and former U.S. attorney Joseph diGenova went public with persistent rumors that private detectives linked to the president were snooping into his background—and his wife's. "Blatant lies," the White House immediately and categorically responded; no one associated with the president "has hired or authorized any private investigator" to look into anyone's background.

But that same day, the *Washington Post* caught Clinton lawyer Mickey Kantor on the telephone with one such investigator, Terry Lenzner of the Investigative Group, Inc. And the very next day, Lenzner admitted that he had been retained by the president's lawyers—and volunteered to the *Post* that, in his view, there would be "nothing inappropriate" about poking around the independent counsel's office. Whereupon the White House's denial became, as Ron Ziegler used to say, "inoperative."

At a news briefing on February 24, Mike McCurry was asked whether White House staffers were leaking gossip "designed to undermine the authority of Ken Starr's prosecutors." He did not say no. McCurry was asked whether there was anything wrong with White House staffers' speaking to reporters about the backgrounds of Starr's employees. He did not say no. McCurry was asked whether the president was aware that there were detectives working in conjunction with his defense attorneys. He said yes. It's just that the detectives aren't looking for "personal derogatory information."

We don't believe that. Terry Lenzner fights rough. In 1991, his employees were discovered literally going through the garbage of an opposing party in an English corporate takeover. In 1997, he was revealed to have proposed a full-scale search for "embarrassing or incriminating details" in the family history of Republican senator Don Nickles of Oklahoma. Lenzner has performed projects of one sort or another in support of Bill Clinton since at least the 1992 presidential campaign. And he is hardly the only one. A private investigator named Anthony Pellicano, saying he was "working for Clinton," recently approached a client of Lucianne Goldberg's about Linda Tripp's Lewinsky recordings.

The sub-rosa effort to discredit the president's antagonists is hardly restricted to run-of-the-mill, public-record material. The newspapers have been too polite or too cautious to report the matter in any detail, but "longtime Washington sources" and "Democratic sources" and "White House officials" have lately been promiscuous with tips about what *Time* magazine calls the "workplace and sexual histories of the prosecutors." What does that mean, exactly? It means this: The tipsters have intimated, without evidence, that officials in Starr's office, whom they name, have had extramarital affairs, have impregnated one another, or are closeted homosexuals.

Filth. It is bad enough that Bill Clinton's unofficial, ostensibly uncoordinated spin campaign has declared unembarrassed "war" on the independent counsel's office. James Carville, McCarthy-like, tells CNN that "I have just been handed a document" that might demonstrate how "slimy," "scuzzy," and "sleazy" Ken Starr is. On ABC, Carville shrieks that Starr is an "out-of-control, sex-crazed person." At a reporters' breakfast, Carville mocks Starr for being a Christian.

But it is quite another thing when White House aides and presidential hirelings behave in a similar manner. None of them may ever be proved legally culpable for obstruction of justice. That's not the point. Emerging from the grand-jury room last Thursday, Sidney Blumenthal openly acknowledged having circulated stories about Kenneth Starr's "vicious" and "lawless" methods. He *bragged* about it, even, and vowed to continue doing it. It is "part of my job," he insisted.

America is not a police state—and the Constitution will not collapse—because Sidney Blumenthal had to answer a couple of hours of questions in a criminal probe. The graver threat—an unprecedented threat—is an executive branch of government stocked with people who make it "my job," at best, to "tell the truth slowly," as Mike McCurry puts it, and, more often, to do everything else they can to prevent our legal system from discerning that truth.

Bill Clinton's White House, as a whole, is an obstruction of justice. Where corruption is concerned, Richard Nixon, more and more, looks like just another also-ran.

—David Tell, for the Editors

The Impeachment Scenario

by Fred Barnes

THERE'S GROWING IMPATIENCE among Republican partisans and conservative activists with the seeming timidity of their congressmen in going after President Clinton. But GOP leaders are far closer to moving forcefully against the president than is widely realized. Indeed, planning is underway to subject Clinton to weeks, maybe months, of impeachment hearings in the House Judiciary Committee—whether Democrats approve or not.

Few Republican leaders are willing to be quoted by name. But here's their scenario for a full-scale inquiry into charges that Clinton broke the law in his dealings with Monica Lewinsky, in campaign fund-raising, and possibly in other activities. They assume that evidence against the president to be handed over to Congress by independent counsel Kenneth Starr will be strong enough to justify an impeachment probe. If it is, they're ready to authorize hearings as early as this summer on a straight party-line vote, with no Democrats voting in favor of hearings. And Republicans won't give Democratic members of the Judiciary Committee any veto over subpoenas either. Judiciary chairman Henry Hyde will merely consult with Democrats over the witness list, then decide on his own who should be subpoenaed.

It's true Hyde usually shies away from uttering the word "impeachment." The reason: He believes hearings at this stage would have little credibility with the public and could easily be tagged as partisan. He wants his inquest to be taken far more seriously by the press and public than were the hearings into Clinton wrongdoing by Sens. Al D'Amato and Fred Thompson and Rep. Dan Burton. Those three sets of hearings were concerned with matters less weighty than impeachment, so the bar will be even higher for Hyde. That's why Hyde will wait until Starr finishes his investigation and hands over his evidence.

"I am being pressured, both inside and outside the House, to begin impeachment hearings now," Hyde

says, choosing his words carefully. (For one, Republican Bob Barr of Georgia, a Judiciary Committee member, has called for hearings to start quickly.) "But it is my judgment that we should wait until Judge Starr, as he is required by law, turns over to the House of Representatives whatever evidence he's developed, if any, that is substantive and credible relating to any impeachable offense. Once that occurs, I expect the material from Judge Starr to be referred to the Judiciary Committee, at which time an intense analysis of it will be undertaken with bipartisan participation. Once that's completed, a judgment will be made, in which I would anticipate leadership participation, concerning the next step."

Actually, the next step is clear. Unless the evidence from Starr is unexpectedly weak, Hyde himself would introduce a bill of impeachment, which would quickly be referred to his committee. Then, Hyde would hire staff—the Judiciary Committee added 90 staffers when it took up President Nixon's impeachment in 1974—and schedule hearings. Lewinsky and many others would be called to testify. The committee would not conduct its own field investigation, duplicating Starr's work. But it might go beyond the evidence accumulated by Starr and take up campaign-finance abuses uncovered in last year's hearings by Thompson, along with other matters.

Hyde is eager for his hearings to be regarded as believable and fair. If the only compelling evidence against Clinton is that he lied in denying a sexual relationship with Lewinsky, the committee might not hold hearings at all. But if there's evidence of possible perjury, suborning of perjury, tampering with witnesses, or obstruction of justice—and Hyde and other GOP leaders expect there will be—the committee will move ahead with a public inquiry. Hyde has not talked to Starr about the evidence the independent counsel is gathering or about anything else.

While Republicans are willing to proceed with hearings with only GOP votes, Hyde doesn't intend to seek approval of any impeachment counts against the president unless some Democrats vote for them. Any effort to remove a president from office must be bipartisan, Hyde feels.

HYDE DOESN'T INTEND TO SEEK APPROVAL OF ANY IMPEACHMENT COUNTS AGAINST CLINTON UNLESS SOME DEMOCRATS VOTE FOR THEM.

And Democrats will turn against Clinton only if the hearings are perceived as credible and thus persuade the public to turn against the president. Hyde says: "You won't get bipartisan support [for impeachment] until the people move in that direction. And the people won't move in that direction unless the hearings are credible and not partisan." Impeachment counts approved by the committee would be voted in the House. If passed, they would be sent to the Senate, where a two-thirds majority is required to remove a president from office.

Neither Hyde nor House speaker Newt Gingrich has any intention of dragging out the impeachment process to keep Clinton in office and deny Vice President Al Gore the opportunity to run for election in 2000 as an incumbent. "We'll take care of Gore when we get to him," insists a GOP leader. The problem now is Clinton. And the GOP plan is to move cautiously against the president—but definitely to move.

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

KOFI HOUR

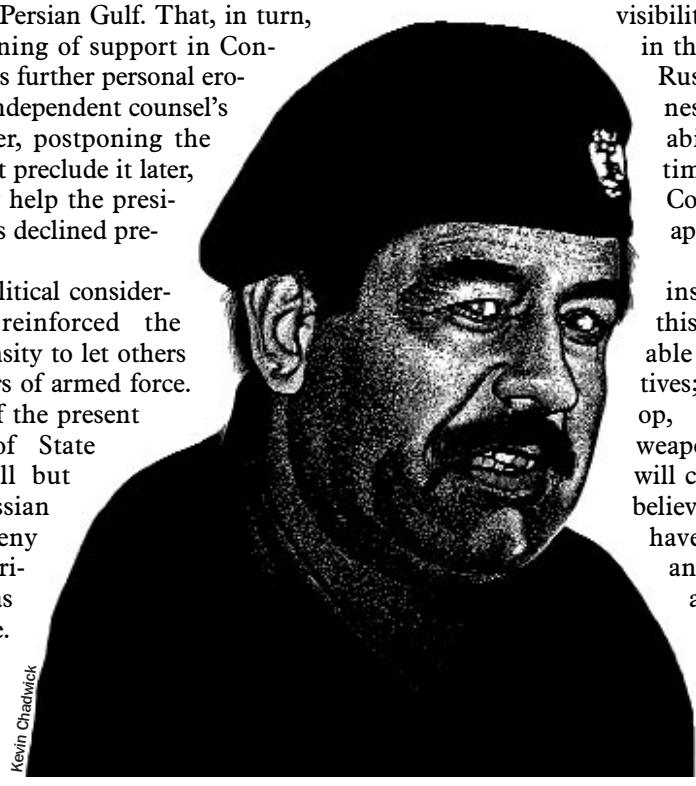
by John R. Bolton

THE REASON U.N. SECRETARY GENERAL KOFI Annan went to Baghdad is not hard to understand: He believed his job required him to make every effort to avoid the use of force against Iraq. Whether one agrees with his view or not, there is no doubt that Annan reflects the ethos in what many U.N. employees reverently call "this house of peace."

What is harder to understand is why the Clinton administration allowed him to go at all, or permitted him any negotiating flexibility. By the time of Annan's departure from New York, the administration had finally, albeit inartfully, rallied an international coalition sufficient to provide political cover for a major military strike against Iraq. Domestically, there was broad, bipartisan agreement about the use of force. Indeed, opinion polls indicated a willingness to go so far as to remove Saddam Hussein from power, a goal well beyond anything contemplated by the administration. American military forces were deployed in the

Persian Gulf region and poised to act.

So why back away? Why call in the United Nations? The administration's reluctance to use force was politically motivated, driven—as virtually all of its foreign policy has been—by the predicted domestic political impact. The president's advisers saw that his opinion ratings remained high, despite the growing Lewinsky scandal. If military force were used, there was a real possibility of American casualties and prisoners, or endless pictures of civilian victims in Iraq. There was also a risk that the American public would finally see through the inadequacy and hypocrisy of Clinton's policy in the Persian Gulf. That, in turn, might lead to a weakening of support in Congress and the president's further personal erosion in the face of the independent counsel's investigation. Moreover, postponing the use of force now did not preclude it later, when it might actually help the president if his poll numbers declined precipitously.


Kevin Chadwick

These calculated political considerations substantially reinforced the administration's propensity to let others take the lead on matters of armed force. In the opening stage of the present tensions, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright all but publicly invited Russian foreign minister Yevgeny Primakov to have the primary role, and he was only too happy to oblige. In many respects, the United States never recovered the initiative after this early blunder. A turn to Kofi Annan was only the next logical step for an administration that desperately wanted someone else to take responsibility for "resolving" the situation without the use of force. After all, Secretary Albright gained her present job largely by leading the charge to oust Boutros-Boutros Ghali from the United Nations and installing Annan in his place. The United Nations was her chosen vehicle, and Annan was her chosen man. Clinton officials were not surprised by what Annan achieved in Baghdad—they had expected it from the outset, and welcomed it.

The key to the administration's fondness for "multilateralism" is that such an approach offers cover and allows the White House to duck tough decisions. Clinton over the years has repeatedly referred to the United Nations as if it operated independent of its member nations, particularly of the United States. By placing Iraq on the U.N.'s plate, the administration could simultaneously claim credit for Annan's agreement and set him up for a fall if the agreement went sour (or rather, when it does). This may be canny domestic politics, but it is profoundly bad foreign policy.

What comes next? Inevitably, the Iraqis will challenge the U.N. weapons-inspection regime or that regime will be an obviously toothless one, obligating us to resume the debate over whether to use military force and to what end. In the meantime, there are at least three important risks ahead.

First, given the United Nations' visibility, we can count on efforts in the Security Council by the Russians, French, and Chinese to circumscribe our ability to use force "next time" without the Security Council's prior, express approval.

Second, the weapons inspectors will not, under this agreement, be any better able to achieve their objectives; Saddam's efforts to develop, produce, and deliver weapons of mass destruction will continue apace. The Iraqis believe that, since October, they have thwarted the inspectors and rolled back substantial amounts of previously achieved progress. They have done this at no cost—military, political, or diplomatic—which of course only increases the likelihood of further Iraqi transgressions.

Finally, the Iraq-U.N. pact itself singles out "the lifting of sanctions" as something "to bring to the full attention" of the Security Council. This is diplo-speak for the secretary general's implied commitment to urge the council to eliminate the sanctions if the Iraqis do not egregiously subvert the U.N. weapons inspectors' work.

This array of problems is not happy news for those who saw the need for stronger, decisive action against Saddam Hussein. But we are exactly where the administration's policy has predictably put us.

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Speaker Armey?

by Matthew Rees

When Rep. Bill Paxon announced last week that he was quitting Congress, it looked like good news for majority leader Dick Armey. Paxon was about to challenge Armey for the number-two job in the House. And whoever won would be in line to be the next speaker of the House—perhaps as soon as next year, if Newt Gingrich resigns as expected to run for president.

But the startling news that Paxon is following in the footsteps of his wife—former representative Susan Molinari, who also gave up a promising career in the House—may actually hurt Armey. By leaving the field early, Paxon has refocused attention on the now-unopposed majority leader's flaws. And a surprising consensus is emerging on Capitol Hill: Dick Armey will easily be reelected majority leader, but he will never become speaker of the House.

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Prior to Paxon's announcement, there was little doubt he would try to topple Armey. Talk of his challenge to Armey had been brewing since last July, when the two of them fell out after the failed putsch to depose Gingrich. Gingrich fired Paxon from his appointed job as chairman of the House GOP leadership team; Armey survived after undergoing a midnight conversion and shifting his allegiance from the plotters back to the speaker. Paxon felt Armey had never fessed up to his involvement, while Armey thought Paxon was a traitor. The bad blood was such that they've barely spoken a word to each other over the past seven months. When announcing he wasn't running for reelection, Paxon made sure to claim he would have had the votes to defeat Armey.

So why, with Paxon's withdrawal, can't Armey celebrate? Republicans traditionally promote their heirs apparent, but Gingrich helped break that tradition, and Armey may be a victim of this shift in the party culture. Rep. Chris Shays, a GOP moderate, believes the next person to hold Gingrich's job will be a conservative, but he doesn't think it will be Armey—a former economics professor with a fondness for Adam Smith neckties. While believing Armey has been a "very good" majority leader, he says, "I don't see Dick in the position of speaker." Armey skeptics in the House—who span the ideological spectrum—point out that he is a loner at heart (his favorite hobby is fishing) who has been most effective pursuing free-market crusades like overhauling the tax code, closing obsolete military bases, and slashing farm subsidies. They say he doesn't seem to enjoy the one-on-one contact that is fundamental to leadership jobs and that he's ill suited to the other great leadership responsibility—serving as a spokesman for the party on the Sunday-morning television shows. They also say Armey frequently leaves the impression he's not listening. "Sometimes you have to shout at the man to get him to understand what you're saying," one House conservative told me. Armey, it turns out, is almost deaf in his right ear, but refuses to wear a hearing aid.

A number of his colleagues say that after last summer's failed coup, Armey recognized his vulnerability and embarked on a self-improvement binge: He's been more accommodating of members' needs, while also spending more time socializing on the House floor. So too, he's becoming more expressive: While giving a talk to school-choice supporters last year, he surprised the audience by choking up with emotion.

Others point to incidents such as Armey's ham-handed attempts at lobbying. At a November meeting of House Republicans, for example, he told the group if they didn't support the fast-track free-trade policy, he wouldn't come to their districts and campaign for them. Far from turning votes, the threat produced flutters of laughter, since no one thought his political future hinged on such appearances by Armey. "Major-league disconnect," said a Republican who was present. More recently, Armey has angered a number of influential Republicans by deciding to keep a healthy chunk of the House's operating budget for his own office rather than distributing it to committee chairmen.

Armey does have many strengths—he's an underappreciated fund-raiser—but he has a problem: While he was once an icon on the right, today he has no obvious constituency. Moderates mostly distrust him on ideological grounds, and many conservatives feel he's sacrificed his principles since joining the leadership. On the personal side, he has few close friends outside his extremely loyal, and able, staff.

Paxon's departure, then, hasn't lessened the odds of a knock-down drag-out leadership struggle among House Republicans—that fight has only been postponed till Gingrich's departure. Had Paxon challenged and defeated Armey, he would have been a lock to become the next speaker. Now it's wide open.

Bob Livingston, the Appropriations Committee chairman, has announced he will run to succeed Gingrich. But Livingston has no ideological constituency, only fellow appropriators. He's derided for being too concerned with process, for keeping Democratic staffers on the Appropriations Committee, and for losing his sense of fiscal conservatism. Pro-lifers were also offended by his ardent opposition late last year to their linking money for the U.N. to abortion policy.

In the unlikely event of a two-man race between Livingston and Armey, Armey would prevail. But they will probably be challenged by at least one less-senior House member, perhaps David McIntosh or Jennifer Dunn. Steve Largent could make a bid to represent social conservatives, and Henry Hyde is often talked about as a compromise choice.

In many ways, Dick Armey now shares the predicament of Al Gore: Their respective superiors are simultaneously their biggest assets and their biggest liabilities. Gore may yet become president, but to hear his colleagues tell it, Armey's career has peaked.

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DEAR RYUTARO: GET SERIOUS

by Todd G. Buchholz

UNLESS HE WANTS TO BE REMEMBERED as the Herbert Hoover of Japan, Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto needs to act to rescue his country's economy—and fast.

For years, many of us have urged Japan to cut taxes or suffer the consequences. Japan has suffered. Last April, in the midst of a seven-year recession, the Japanese hiked their consumption tax by 66 percent, shoving the economy into a dangerous dive, which in turn drained every last drop of confidence among the Indonesians and others. Make no mistake: Despite the horrendous management of banks and real estate throughout the East, the current pan-Asian crisis is "Made in Japan." When foreign investors realized how deadly the hike in consumption taxes would be, they pulled the plug, and Japanese institutions themselves started bailing out of stocks that had once held promise. Japan's Nikkei stock-market index began a 25 percent nosedive in June 1997, shortly after the April 1 tax hike and *before* the implosion of the South Korean market.

So, how can Japan resuscitate itself, and what should the Clinton administration demand? Below is a four-point program that would be both controversial and successful. The three latter steps are public measures, but the first would require tricky behind-the-scenes diplomacy.

1. Bow down to U.S. management techniques, just as American firms deferred to Japanese know-how in the 1980s. Invite top-flight U.S. businesses like General Electric, Intel, and Citicorp to take over some of the Nikkei's crown jewels. These U.S. companies know how to create profits for shareholders, how to lop off decaying divisions, and how to energize new projects. And include with that buyout invitation a guarantee that the government's regulatory bureaucrats will not scuttle the deals or entangle them in red tape. If GE's Jack Welch announced that he was buying Sony, or Citicorp's John Reed took over the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi, the world's investors would look at Japan in a dramatically different way.

2. Reverse the consumption-tax hike. Unlike American families, for whom shopping is a national sport, Japanese families have locked themselves in their homes—department-store sales were down 5 percent last year. And cutting the consumption tax would have the added benefit of preventing the U.S.-Japan trade deficit from ballooning to record levels.

3. Cut income taxes—radically, permanently. The government's cynical one-time tax cut, announced in December, was far smaller than had been expected and precipitated a violent recoil in the markets. There is now little time to spare and absolutely no room for another false start. Japan's 50 percent top personal-income-tax rate breeds inefficiency. The government is in effect bribing executives—even those of bankrupt firms—to receive compensation in the form of (non-taxable) higher benefits. Shareholders are the ones who pick up the tab for those raucous nights in karaoke bars. The Hashimoto government should even consider adopting a flat tax. Japan's relatively homogeneous society and flat income distribution (the country has no great rich-and-poor gap) would allow it to reap many benefits in efficiency, without setting off

the political landmines that impede the flat-tax debate in the United States.

4. The Bank of Japan should pump up the money supply, a symbol of the strangled banking sector. The bank contends that its official discount rate already touches 0 percent (actually, it's 0.5 percent) and therefore cannot go lower. To which the response is: It certainly can, especially when there is deflation. With prices falling 1 percent annually, real interest rates are 1.5 percent, too high for an economy that's been bobbing at sea since 1989. In 1992, back in America, Alan Greenspan guided short-term rates below the inflation rate. The Bank of Japan should in fact ignore interest rates and simply buy bonds until the money supply starts growing at three times its recent rate of 2.5 percent.

Of these four steps, the first will strike the Japanese as most frightening. It certainly startled Americans in the 1980s when so many pundits declared the death of the U.S. economy and predicted that we'd all be flipping burgers for the Japanese (who, at some point, would surely gobble up McDonald's). But if Americans could survive, and thrive under, the Japanese purchase of Columbia Pictures, Pebble Beach, and much of Hawaii, Japan can easily live with some GE toasters—which would brown delicious bagels to go with Starbucks coffee.

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The Elixir of Class Size

by Chester E. Finn Jr. and Michael J. Petrilli

The president has proposed to shrink class sizes in the early grades by hiring 100,000 more teachers at federal expense. This is quintessential Clintonism—a warm Labrador puppy of a policy notion, petted by teachers and parents alike, but destined to bite when it grows up.

There is precious little evidence that smaller classes help students—achievement may even go down if the new teachers are mediocre—but don't try telling this to voters. Smaller classes are a pollster's delight. The idea is so popular that many states and communities have jumped the gun. Indiana shrank its primary classes more than a decade ago. California's Pete Wilson was hailed when he said the state's surplus should be used for this purpose. Class-size reduction was part of the successful campaign platform of Virginia's new Republican governor, Jim Gilmore, who has promised 4,000 new teachers in the state over the course of his four-year term. Similar proposals await legislative action in Alabama, Delaware, New York, and many other jurisdictions.

Why this lemming-like rush off the class-size cliff? "Teachers are thrilled, parents are thrilled," explained a California elementary-school principal in response to the president's plan. Parents simply take for granted that smaller classes mean better education. Teachers cheer because their jobs get easier with fewer students per classroom. Unions get more members. Administrators get more staff. And most local school boards welcome any move by Uncle Sam to pay teacher salaries.

Congress will therefore likely end up saying yes. But it shouldn't. The administration's plan—and others like it—is bad for at least five reasons.

First, the conventional wisdom that students do better in smaller classes is flat wrong. After surveying all the relevant research, economist Eric Hanushek of the University of Rochester concludes that "there is little systematic gain from general reduction in class size." Besides, classes have been shrinking for decades—today's national average of 22 kids per classroom is down from 30-plus in the 1950s—with no commensurate gains in learning, although the cost has been immense. (No "reform" is more expensive than smaller classes.) The Asian lands that trounce us on international assessments have vastly larger classes, often 40 or 50 youngsters per teacher. Yes, there are one or two studies indicating that fewer *kindergarten* children in a classroom is linked with modest test-score gains. But put it this way: If smaller classes were a drug, the FDA would not let it onto the market. Additional experiments might be warranted, but no scientist would say that its efficacy has been proven.

There's a simple reason why small classes rarely learn more than big ones: Their teachers don't do anything differently. The same lessons, textbooks, and instructional methods are typically employed with 18 or 20 children as with 25 or 30. It's just that the teacher has fewer papers to grade and fewer parents to confer with. Getting any real achievement bounce from class shrinking hinges on teachers who know their stuff and use proven methods of instruction. Of course, knowledgeable and highly effective teachers

would also fare well with classes of 30 or 35. Jaime Escalante, renowned as the "best teacher in America," packs his classroom every year with 30-plus "disadvantaged" teenagers and consistently produces scholars who pass the tough Advanced Placement calculus exam. But such teaching is not the norm in U.S. schools, and adding teachers to the rolls won't cause it to be. (Indeed, a federal program hellbent on raising achievement would probably do better by firing rather than hiring 100,000 teachers. Students would be in larger classes but with better teachers, who could be paid more with the salary moneys freed up by the layoffs.)

Second, those 12 billion new dollars (over seven years) would likely do more good if spent in other—politically riskier—ways. $1.7 billion a year would, for example, furnish $4,000 scholarships to 425,000 low-income children to escape from grim urban schools into private or charter (or suburban public) schools. That's equivalent to liberating every boy and girl in Washington, Baltimore, and Philadelphia from the educational carnage that now surrounds them. Alternatively, such sums would pay for *all* current U.S. teachers to take more university courses. The leading problem in many classrooms, after all, isn't the pupil body-count. It's teachers who never mastered the content. The Education Department reports that 36 percent of public-school teachers of academic subjects neither majored nor minored in their main teaching field. To get them up to speed, the amount Clinton proposes to spend on class-size reduction would yield a $4,500 tuition grant for every one of the nation's 2.7 million teachers.

Which brings us to the third flaw in his scheme. It's embedded in a larger "teacher improvement" package that has little to do with the quality of the current teaching force, will strengthen the ed-school-and-certification monopolies for future teachers, and will weaken halting state efforts to develop sound alternatives. The White House will, for example, require communities that want to participate in the class-reduction scheme to ensure that every person hired is (or soon will be) "fully certified."

At first glance, "certified teachers" looks like another warm puppy of a policy. Who could want anything else? Yet in practically every state, the only way to get certified today is to take lots of "methods" courses in colleges of education rather than immersing oneself in the subject to be taught. It's certification that blocks millions of able adults from teaching in public schools. (Charter and private schools are often free from these rules—and plenty of well-educated people queue up at their doors for every teaching job.) It's certification that keeps low-quality education schools in business.

Fourth, bringing 100,000 teachers onto direct federal support will create another permanent program, a virtual entitlement sure to grow over time. What happens in Year Eight, after Clinton's $12 billion is spent? Easy. The program will be extended. Indeed, if 18 children per class is good, the next politician will claim that 16 must be better. If Uncle Sam is going to provide the country with smaller classes through third

grade, why not through fourth, then fifth? The Clinton version is just a preview of coming attractions.

Finally, across-the-board class reductions can leave needy kids worse off. Take California, for example. When Pete Wilson shrank primary classes throughout the state, veteran teachers left inner-city schools in droves, lured by the higher pay and cushier working conditions of suburban systems that suddenly had openings.

President Clinton is not the only politician now eyeing this path to voters' hearts. Congressmen and senators on both sides of the aisle are hastening to craft their own measures. They like teachers—and puppies—too. Most pending proposals (like the White House "teacher improvement" package) lift their ideas from the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, a private group funded by the Rockefeller and Carnegie foundations and chaired by longtime North Carolina governor Jim Hunt. Its members include the heads of both national teacher unions and a blue-ribbon list of ed-school professors, deans, and presidents. This crew contends that the central weakness in U.S. teacher training is that candidates don't spend enough time in "professional development programs," that states lack "professional standards" boards, that certification requirements need to be strengthened, and that all teacher training programs should jump through the same "accreditation" hoops.

The commission's recommendations boil down to teachers' spending more time in ever-more-uniform education schools and barring the classroom door to everyone else. It's no surprise that the administration has bought this line. But why Congress?

If there's money burning to be spent, Congress should give it to states to underwrite novel approaches to the training, pay, and licensing of teachers. Cajole the states to break the ed-school hammerlock, loosen the certification stranglehold, and blaze alternative paths into teaching so that well-educated liberal-arts graduates and experienced professionals can enter the classroom from many directions. States could also demand that every teacher—veteran and novice alike—master the subjects they are expected to teach—and hold them accountable for pupil achievement by scrapping tenure and substituting multi-year contracts that reward results and penalize failure.

Such suggestions lack the instant appeal of Clinton's new pooch. Unlike class-size reduction, which has no known enemies, serious attention to quality means attacking the school establishment's strongest redoubts: the unions, teacher colleges, state regulatory apparatuses, and interlocking special-interest groups. It's much easier just to call for more adult bodies in the classroom (and confine all "quality control" provisions to newcomers.) Schools won't improve. Kids won't learn more. But the politicians will score points with the public—and with the unions. We understand why Bill Clinton needs such points nowadays. But his proposal is really a dog of an idea. Congress should shop at a different pet store.

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Up from CUNY

by Robert Berman

"THERE WAS A PERFERVID SENSE of intellectualism," muses the sociologist Daniel Bell in the recent documentary *Arguing the World*. He was recalling his contentious student days at City College of New York. The film lovingly profiles not only Bell (CCNY, 1938) but his fellow classmates and intellectuals Irving Kristol (1940), Nathan Glazer (1944), and the late Irving Howe (1940).

The old CCNY was harder to gain admission to and graduate from than any other undergraduate institution in America. It also produced the most Nobel laureates. The school's honor roll includes Jonas Salk, Felix Frankfurter, Ira Gershwin, Bernard Baruch, Sidney Hook, A. Philip Randolph, Upton Sinclair, Ed Koch, Colin Powell, and Andrew Grove (the CEO of Intel). All of that ended, however, in 1970, with the advent of open admissions, aka "access to higher education."

This policy decreed that every graduate of a New York City public school had a right to attend a City University of New York campus—for free. Thus, CCNY was flooded with students who before would have been lucky to gain entry to a community college, and the community colleges were taken over by persons who had little reason to pursue higher education at all. A $4-billion-a-year patronage mill, today's CUNY—a term referring to the city's entire, sprawling system of post-secondary schools, funded by the taxpayers—functions as a welfare agency rather than an educational institution.

Since that fateful year of 1970, CUNY's administrators and professors have devoted themselves to feeding the system's students—80 percent of whom are black or Hispanic—the fiction that white racism is responsible for life's woes. Sixty-eight percent of CUNY's four-year students require remedial classes; in its community colleges, 86 percent. These figures, the worst in the state, derive from the students' inability to pass tests at the 11th-grade level in reading, writing, and mathematics. Only 1.3 percent of community-college students graduate with associate degrees in two years, and fewer than 9 percent of four-year-college students earn bachelor's degrees in four years. Meanwhile, CUNY professional-school graduates have the state's lowest teacher-certification and law-board-passing rates. Education-school graduates of the State University of New York system have a 95 percent passing rate on the teacher-certification exam, but CUNY graduates pass at a rate of only 62 percent—and at CCNY and the Afrocentric Medgar Evers College, the rate is a sad 40 percent.

The stakes here are considerable. According to the United Federation of Teachers, over 80 percent of New York City's public-school teachers (including those who have flunked the certification test but have been hired anyway) are CUNY alumni. Among these teachers, illiteracy is widespread, as among the CUNY graduates who staff the city's social-service agencies. (These latter jobs were once held by persons who had no more than a high-school education, who performed better.) No wonder the parents of promising black and Hispanic students—whom CUNY's chieftains claim to embrace—avoid the system like the plague.

Two recent developments, however, have provided a ray of hope. In September, after a miserable tenure, CUNY's chancellor left to afflict a university in the South. And in January, the president of the scandal-plagued, "bilingual" (meaning, Spanish-only) Hostos Community College was induced to leave after receiving a $200,000 buyout. Yet these small victories in personnel are no substitute for structural reform.

Consider Hostos, whose English as a Second Language program routinely violates testing secrecy, distributing lower-level final examinations to students in advance. Despite intensive coaching last summer, 215 out of 226 upper-level students (95 percent) failed the school's own, radically dumbed-down English Writing Assessment Test. Rather than reform Hostos, CUNY's radical multiculturalists would prefer to remake the entire system in the Hostos image. They propose giving college credit for English as a Second Language classes, abolishing all grading in favor of "portfolios" of work, and allowing students to take CUNY's already-dumbed-down, experimental Academic Certification Exam in Spanish.

So far, worthwhile reform has only a few allies. Fortunately, one of them is Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, who has called for the elimination of open admissions and the privatization of all community-college remedial programs. For his troubles, the mayor has been roundly attacked by local politicians like Peter Vallone, speaker of the City Council. Even so, Giuliani's proposals are far too modest.

Here are some proposals that would do some good: All applicants to four-year schools should be required to score 1100, and community-college applicants 1000, on the combined math and verbal sections of the SAT. (Thanks to the recent "norming" of the SAT, those scores are the equivalent of 960 and 860 on the previous test.) All English as a Second Language courses, remedial courses, and ethnic-ghetto courses (black studies, women's studies, gay studies, Puerto Rican studies, Judaic studies, etc.) should be abolished. By agreement with the state, education schools should be closed and academic requirements for teachers increased, so that teachers may be truer scholars in their fields. Negotiations among the city, state, and federal governments could allow the city to return to the cheaper, simpler (pre-1976) policy of neither charging tuition nor dispensing financial aid. New York might once again have the nation's best-educated public-school teachers and civil servants.

No matter what CUNY's self-styled advocates say, the giants of the black pedagogical tradition, including W.E.B. Du Bois, had nothing but contempt for those who would condemn black persons to a second-class education. Du Bois wrote, "If the standards of a great Negro college are to be set by schools of lower and different object, whither are the ideals of this University falling? If you find that you cannot give technical courses of college grade, then give high-school courses or kindergarten courses and call them by their right names. There may often be an excuse for doing things poorly in this world, but there is never any excuse for calling a poorly done thing, well done."

In *Arguing the World*, one interviewee recalls that a dispute on some contemporary matter 60 years ago required a disquisition on the division of labor among the ancients. Du Bois would have approved. He understood, as did the men and women who oversaw CUNY during its golden years, that the responsibility of running the offices of a great city, and that of teaching the children of its poor, require a university system that will attract and develop the best students. Bright but poor city kids ought to be able to hope for more than their present aspiration: to rise from welfare client . . . to welfare worker.

Robert Berman, a graduate of the CUNY system, is a teacher in that system.

Hillary Clinton and the Crisis of Feminism

By Noemie Emery

Where are the feminists? David Broder wondered on *Meet the Press*. "Why are they silent about the allegations involving the president?" When you hear these words from that source on that program, you know hard times have arrived. The feminists stand exposed as a partisan pressure group, which is not what they said they were. They said they were a universal moral movement acting on behalf of all women. They claimed, very loudly, that harassment was an outrage and a horror. But as it turns out, they are for women selectively, and against harassment only now and then. It was never a principle—merely a hammer, a tool used to bludgeon political enemies. Their outrage, it is now clear, has always been a fraud and a pretense. No one can now believe a word they say.

That is why the era of feminist influence, which peaked in 1992, the "Year of the Woman," may now be drawing to a close. It began in 1991 with the Hill-Thomas hearings and bloomed the next year into numerous payoffs: harassment consciousness, harassment law, four new feminists in the U.S. Senate, the first feminist president in American history, and his ur-feminist heroine wife. All of these were connected, and they were powered by Anita Hill. "I believe Anita Hill," said Gov. Clinton in 1992, clasping hands with feminist candidates. His wife attended a lunch in Hill's honor and urged women with stories like hers to come forward.

That was the problem—one did. At that moment, feminist law and feminist consciousness began to ensnare Bill and Hillary Clinton, beginning their nightmare. It was the feminists who, in their search for private dirt on Clarence Thomas, Robert Bork, and John Tower, created the conflation of public and private from which the Clintons now suffer. It was by the feminists' standards that Bill Clinton's behavior ascended from the seedy to the criminal. It was the feminists who created the aggressive laws and culture that led to the Paula Jones lawsuit. It was their overheated rhetoric in the Hill-Thomas hearings that formed the idea that it was the *pass*, not the punishment, that was the basis of legal harassment, thus giving the Jones case its legitimacy. It was by the feminists' insistence that not merely an *act* but an *atmosphere* could be construed as criminal. It was their urging that created the expansive nature of harassment law, wherein a plaintiff is given unlimited access to rummage freely in the prior private life of a defendant, a scope not permitted even in cases of rape. And it is *this* triumph that may prove lethal—for it was on one such fishing expedition that Paula Jones's lawyers came up with the names of Kathleen Willey and Monica Lewinsky, who otherwise would have remained unknown.

No Anita Hill, no harassment law. No harassment law, no Paula Jones. Anita Hill brought on the great Clinton crisis. The feminists laid the groundwork for the destruction of their own.

So: No Anita Hill, no harassment culture. No harassment culture, no harassment law. No harassment law, no Paula Jones. No Paula Jones, no discovery process. No discovery process, no other women. No other women, no lies. No lies, no perjury charges, no witness tampering, no obstruction of justice, no crisis, no talk of removal. Anita Hill brought on the great Clinton crisis. The feminists laid the groundwork for the destruction of their own.

Aware of this, some of the sisters, with their Bill on the griddle, are quickly reversing field. The per-

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sonal, it seems, is not always political: It sometimes is quite private, which is something all adults should understand. Harassment, which used to be measured by tonal matters of atmosphere—a joke overheard, a magazine on a desk, the wrong kind of picture—is now to be measured only in the narrowest of legal terms. If passes do not lead to rape, they are of no consequence. "She wasn't killed, she wasn't harassed, she wasn't fired," harrumphed Betty Friedan about Paula Jones. "I abhor the use of a sexual issue in this way." The mucking about in the private arena that feminists enjoyed so much in the cases of Tower and Thomas is now a shameful and degrading exercise, and ought to be outlawed.

The feminists' one-time concept that sex equals power also has gone by the boards. In the old days, before Bill Clinton was in the dock, a consensual relationship between mature coworkers, when the man held the higher professional rank, was automatically defined as coercive, owing to the sinister nature of power. Now, sex between an unpaid 21-year-old intern and the president of the United States is cool. Once, sisterhood was powerful and women were supported. Now, it seems, women can—and do—tell terrible whoppers, and men ought to be taken at their word. "The president made a definitive statement. I believe him," said Rep. Rosa DeLauro. In previous times, fostering a locker-room mentality, where anything went, was defined as the worst of all social offenses. Careers were derailed over what earlier had been regarded as hijinks. Now, boys will be boys, or possibly goats, as in the case of our president. What's a little harmless fun among friends?

Hillary has become the very model of the Victorian little woman, denying it happened, blaming the floozies, absolving her husband of blame. Her iconic stature is gone.

Defending their goat-king, feminists are not only changing their old standards—they are surrendering their queen. Alone, Bill Clinton is merely one more male politician, "right" on the issues, but no more so than others—one more expendable pol. But if the feminists' stake in Bill Clinton has always been marginal, their stake in his wife, and his marriage, has been great. She was their icon, the gender-avenger, demanding, and getting, respect from all comers, the forger of new and sublime roles for women, the bearer of deep-seated change. Her power-shared marriage was the new model, the ideal that all women should reach for.

No more. Maureen Dowd writes of "their repugnant bargain." Says one-time believer Margaret Talbot of the *New Republic*, "It seems harder than ever to scrunch our eyes shut and construe Hillary Clinton as a feminist icon, a role model for young women of ambition and talent . . . The bargain she seems to have made—to put up with the humiliations of marriage to an apparently indefatigable womanizer in exchange for a share of his power—seems increasingly just like that—a bargain, an unidealistic and demeaning deal."

And Hillary herself? She is a victim, an "enabler," the worst kind of compliant wife, forced to stand up and make pleas for the bounder in public and suffer the insulting public musings of his friends. Is this what "liberation" was for? Hillary Clinton has suffered humiliations the likes of which Rose Kennedy never dreamed of. And as working women defect, she has gathered a new and odd set of allies—angry white males who envy her husband and the license she gives him, and the housewives she once seemed to look down on who now see her as a figure with whom they can empathize. Hillary has become the very model of the Victorian little woman, denying it happened, blaming the floozies, absolving her husband of blame.

Bill Clinton has been toxic for women, and most of all for his wife. No matter what happens to him or his future, Hillary's iconic stature is gone. She has lost her real dream, to be a cultural idol, a woman for the ages, a trailblazer. Her trail now leads back to the old-fashioned parlor, where the wronged wife stands up for her wandering husband, pretending that nothing is wrong. She is of interest now only as a psychological puzzle: How can she stand it? Why does she put up with it? What is she thinking now? No one any longer compares her to Eleanor Roosevelt. Few women can now want to be like her. No future first ladies will adopt her as a model. She will not figure in little girls' dreams.

But of course, feminists don't approve of little girls' dreams, or of most women, either. "We are not falling on our swords for these types of women, Paula Jones or Gennifer Flowers," a congresswoman told

the *New York Times*. "We do not see Monica as some little naïf here." But there are many more women in this country like Gennifer, Paula, and Monica than there are professors like Anita Hill. (We don't defend women who don't dress the way we do. But we do defend lawyers from Yale.) Like Bill Clinton, feminists have exposed themselves: as a small interest group, on the fringe of one party, no more significant than the rest. And possibly less so, as they lack credibility. Outed as fakes on their signature issue, what other lies have they told? What other fits have they feigned for their interests? Blessedly, we may have seen the last of the Thomas and Tailhook hysterics, of the jihads against men who "don't get it." Their silence, and their words, will come back to mock them. We now "get" the sisters just fine.

In 1991, Anita Hill did not keep Clarence Thomas off the Supreme Court. But she has at last brought down an even larger figure—a president—in actual, if not legal, terms. No one again will look at him without laughing. She has ruined Bill Clinton as a serious person, destroyed his wife as a cultural role model, and exposed as empty the movement they embraced. Feminists led the way to their own and their leaders' destruction. And they did it all by themselves. ♦

Harry Thomason, First Pal

Why the Clintons' Old Friend Moved Into the White House

By Tucker Carlson

Shortly after the Monica Lewinsky story first broke, Hillary Clinton asked her old friend Harry Thomason to come to Washington. Thomason, who was in the middle of producing both a sitcom pilot and a feature film, dropped everything and bought a plane ticket. Within days, the Hollywood producer had taken up residence in the Clintons' private quarters on the second floor of the White House. He stayed for nearly a month.

What was Harry Thomason doing at the White House? Not much, claim his friends. "He's just wonderful company," explains James Carville. "Harry's good at just popping into your office and offering you a Lifesaver." Fellow spinner Paul Begala agrees. "He's a buddy," Begala says, "someone the president and Mrs. Clinton can stay up with, laugh and talk about old times, and play Boggle." According to Clinton adviser Rahm Emanuel, Thomason's presence has been a welcome diversion for White House aides shoulder-deep in scandal management: "Harry's role, when we'd get into a tunnel and work too long and too hard, was to make sure we'd go to lunch. He'd get us out of here."

It's an appealing image—the hearty, bearded Thomason as White House jester-cum-therapist. And it is true that Thomason, along with his wife, the sitcom writer Linda Bloodworth-Thomason, is perhaps the Clintons' closest friend, particularly since the first couple's recent estrangement from Vernon Jordan. Still, anyone who believes that Thomason was summoned from Los Angeles simply to dispense hard candy and play board games probably still believes that Vernon Jordan is an avuncular power broker who arranges multiple job interviews for promising White House interns. Actually, Thomason has never spent time at the White House without throwing his weight around.

According to the *Washington Post*, it was Thomason who choreographed the president's first "forceful, jaw-clenched, finger-wagging, lecture-thumping" denial of the affair. A few days later, at the White House dinner for British prime minister Tony Blair, Thomason was spotted by one reporter huddled in a corner with Rahm Emanuel reading an early version of the damaging *New York Times* story about Clinton assistant Betty Currie. In late February, reports surfaced that Thomason had raised money in Hollywood to finance an investigation into Ken Starr's private life.

Thomason responded angrily to the allegation he hired private investigators—"That's the most ridicu-

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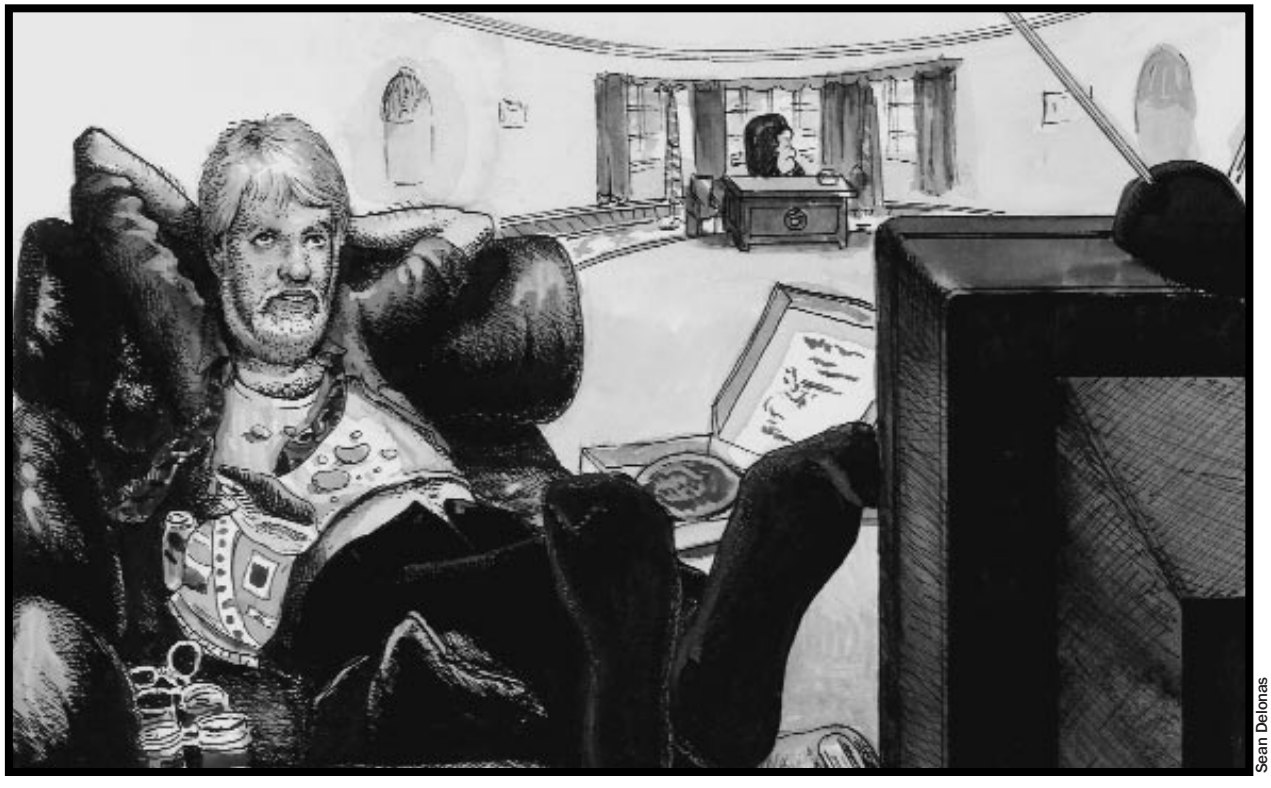
lous thing I've ever heard," he told CNN. And while his anger may be sincere, there is no denying he has been central to the White House spin effort. "Like me," says Harold Ickes, another old Clinton friend recently returned to the White House, "Harry does talk to a number of press people during the course of a day." Unlike Ickes, however, Thomason has almost unlimited access to the president and so is able to act as a kind of messenger between the president and the rest of the administration's communications apparatus. "He gives a sense to the president of how things are playing, of what people outside the hothouse of the White House are saying," says Ickes. "Basically, he says, 'Here's what the press is interested in; here's where they're going on certain issues.'" Thomason also helps decide where the White House should go. "He's been spending a lot of time hanging out in [White House communications aide Sidney] Blumenthal's office," says one former White House staffer who knows (and likes) Thomason. "They work together on this stuff."

What sort of stuff is that? According to several people with knowledge of the effort, Thomason has been at the center of the ongoing, if quiet, White House campaign to discredit individual reporters who are aggressively covering the scandal, notably Jeff Gerth of the *New York Times* and Susan Schmidt of the *Washington Post*, both of whom also covered Whitewater (a story that Gerth originally broke). Attacking individual reporters as sloppy and biased is a risky strategy for any White House to pursue (especially if, as in this case, the reporters being attacked are among the most highly regarded in American journalism), but Thomason and his wife have long harbored an unusually active hatred of the press.

Late in 1992, reporter Jacob Weisberg profiled the couple for the *New Republic*. The Thomasons had played a large role in the Clinton campaign that year—Harry produced the Democratic convention; Linda consulted the costume designer on the set of their show *Designing Women* to help with Hillary Clinton's makeover. On the other hand, as Weisberg pointed out, the Thomasons also had a tendency to take credit for successes that weren't theirs (like locating the film footage of 16-year-old Bill Clinton with President Kennedy, when in fact it was Mandy Grunwald's office that found the film at the Kennedy Library). Weisberg went on to note the uncanny similarities between Bloodworth-Thomason's hagiographic Clinton documentary, *The Man From Hope*, and scenes from her politically aware sitcom, *Evening Shade*. Weisberg's article was critical, but not vicious or unfair.

The Thomasons, though, immediately went to



Sean Delonas

Def-Con 1. Within weeks, they had worked an attack on Weisberg into an episode of *Hearts Afire*, one of their sitcoms. At one point, the female lead on the show denounced *New Republic* writers like Weisberg as "little old baby Harvard boys" who "walk around in this constipated haze of Ivy League smugness, intellectually diddling one another. . . . They're irrelevant, arrogant, snide and cynical and negative, and on top of everything else, they're short." And that was just the beginning of the outburst. Editors at the *New Republic*, Bloodworth-Thomason told one interviewer, "have no facial hair, no life experience, and you feel like their parents and the baby sitter's dead."

Needless to say, the assault was utterly out of proportion to Weisberg's offense, and it should have been a warning to the Clintons that their friends were dangerously thin-skinned and politically unsophisticated. No one seemed to notice, however, and after the 1993 inauguration (which the couple also directed), Harry Thomason stayed in Washington as an unofficial adviser to the president. From the beginning, it was obvious political disaster was imminent. Though he never became a federal employee, Thomason regularly met with White House staff on communications strategy. He was invited to attend Mrs. Clinton's health-care task force. At one point, Thomason brought the television actress Markie Post to a series of meetings, identifying her as his "assistant."

Nor was Thomason shy about using his access to the president. In March 1993, Thomason, who before moving to Hollywood from Arkansas worked as an art teacher and football coach, wrote a letter to Bruce Lindsey on behalf of a friend named Larry Epstein. "Larry has a sterling reputation as a lawyer, and I recommend him highly, should a position for a federal judgeship come open."

Later, Thomason forwarded to the White House a request from chubby exercise guru Richard Simmons, who wanted to be appointed to the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. (When the Simmons letter was produced as an exhibit at a deposition several years later, Thomason's lawyer, Bob Bennett, expressed amazement: "Is that that little guy that runs around on the boat?" Bennett wondered. "He and Kathie Lee, and they tickle each other?")

Within a few months, Thomason's first career as a presidential adviser came to an end when it was revealed that he had pushed the White House to get rid of longtime employees of the travel office. Under fire as the authors of the first major scandal of the Clinton administration, the Thomasons retreated back to California, unindicted but sullied, bitter at their treatment in Washington. The feeling was mutual: David Gergen, Clinton's media adviser at the time, recommended that the president invite the Thomasons back to the White House much less often. Outside of their work in Hollywood, not much was heard from them until the Lewinsky affair.

Their return cannot bode well for the president. The Thomasons may be geniuses in the world of entertainment, but they are pure Wile E. Coyote when it comes to the nation's capital. In 1993, shortly before the travel office fiasco exploded, Thomason turned to a friend and made a prediction: Firing the career employees of the travel office, he said, would turn out to be his best idea since confetti at the convention. It'll be "a great press story," Thomason explained. "Bill Clinton cleaning up house." ♦

Anthony Lewis: The President Must Go

Edited by David Frum

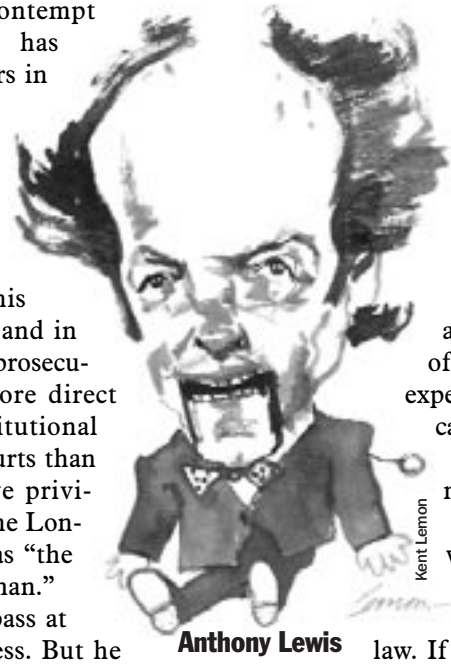
Those of us who remember the stirring attacks on presidential lawlessness during Watergate have been startled by the silence from one-time upholders of the rule of law in the face of lawlessness by the Clinton administration. Has something changed between 1998 and 1973? Puzzled, we looked up some of the columns by one of the fiercest scourges of Nixonian wrongdoing, Anthony Lewis of the New York Times*, and discovered that yes, it was all the same. Unfortunately, Mr. Lewis appears to have taken an extended sabbatical. So we decided to help out. With just a few changes of proper names and no additions other than those marked in brackets, Lewis's writings from 25 years ago provide a compelling explanation of what's constitutionally at stake today. We'll supply footnotes on request.*—D.F.

There are too many sawdust men in Washington now, men with nothing inside—no limits of character to what they will do for political ends. If it works, if you can get away with it, do it: That is the only standard.

The lawyers of this Administration have made their names symbols of contempt for law. The lawyer-President has thrown dirt on judges. His lawyers in the White House have sent thugs out after [FBI] files and conspired to obstruct justice.

The old brazen attitude is evident in the President's attempt to keep present and former aides from testifying about his own knowledge of [the scandal], and in his resistance to an independent prosecutor. There could hardly be a more direct challenge to the co-equal constitutional authority of Congress and the courts than the expanded claim of Executive privilege. One must conclude, as did the London Sunday Telegraph, that it was "the gamble of a guilty and desperate man."

[The President] has made a pass at improving relations with the press. But he and his fallen aides still project the "stupefying belief," as the Economist of London put it, that in [the scandal], "the only serious trouble lay in people's inquisitiveness." Leaking is a widespread phenomenon, deeply rooted in the American system of government, and using the criminal law to stop it would raise grave difficulties.



Anthony Lewis

We are admonished not to follow McCarthy tactics and jump from hearsay premises to guilty conclusions. Fair enough. In terms of hard evidence, no outsider can prove today that the president was involved in the original crimes or their subsequent concealment. That is a wise caution, but it does not relieve the political dilemma of [the scandal]. For Presidents are judged by broader standards than personal guilt. They are responsible for the character of their associates and for what is done in the name of the White House. One would expect an inquiry or a detailed, categorical denial of the charges. But no. The White House press secretary dismisses it all as "hearsay" or evidence from unidentified sources. In other words, grave charges will be ignored unless they are proved as they would have to be in a court of law. If that standard applied, virtually no corruption would ever be officially investigated. In the end these brazen tactics failed. The press, or some of it, kept digging despite lies and threats.

What threatens America now is an enfeebled Presidency. At best [the President] will be asking the world to believe that the men he chose as his closest associates committed evil without his knowing it.

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And it may be much worse: the doubts may come ever closer to him. The authority of the President, which is to say the authority of the United States, will be gravely damaged. [E]ven overseas, the poison of [the scandal] is having its effect. Heads of government are not usually finicky about the morals of other powers. But when they deal with an American President, they want to know that he speaks with authority: that he can bring Congress along on a trade agreement or a security treaty.

If [the President] were capable of redeeming vision or self-perception, the prospect would be less painful. But he is not. He is a man who can obstruct election campaign reform and then ask the public to join him in a great reform effort. He is a man without shame. The appalling dilemma facing this country is how to live for nearly four years with a wounded Presidency. Some people argue for what amounts to a conspiracy of silence. We must close our eyes to what has happened, they say, and let government continue—almost as it was allowed to continue during Woodrow Wilson's illness.

The alternative is forbidding. [Only one] President has ever been forced from office: even a serious attempt would put awful strains on the system. But can this country stop short of the truth, can it live a pretense, and be once again the hope of the world?

The framers of the Constitution plainly intended impeachment to play a broad role as one of their several defenses against abuse of power. That was still the view fifty years later, when de Tocqueville said the main object of the clause was "to take power away from a man who makes ill use of it." It is a historical anomaly, therefore, to treat the idea of impeaching a President as almost sacrilegious. It is inconvenient to change Presidents in mid-term; it is risky. But the risks are not only one way. We can live with a weakened presidency; we have done so before. But can we live with ourselves under a leadership that we know is tainted?

IT IS A HISTORICAL ANOMALY TO TREAT THE IDEA OF IMPEACHING A PRESIDENT AS ALMOST SACRILEGIOUS. IT IS RISKY TO CHANGE PRESIDENTS. BUT THE RISKS ARE NOT ONLY ONE WAY.

The American system is less flexible than the parliamentary, but it does not condemn us to the rigid embrace of a President unfit for office. The Constitution speaks not only of "removal" but also of "resignation." Is there any serious possibility of resignation? It is an act of self-denial hard to imagine in any man ambitious enough to become President. [Still] one cannot exclude a decision that only [the President's] resignation can open the way to a healing of American politics. ♦

President Quimby

Don't Worry About "The Children"

By Dave Shiflett

While the Troubles may not be hurting the Clinton poll numbers a lick, respectable opinion has it that the scandal definitely isn't doing The Children any good at all. As a result, parents are said to be struggling on two fronts: one, to shield their kids from the fouler aspects of the allegations, and two, to help them avoid becoming unduly cynical about democratic institutions. Because this scandal may stretch on for quite some time, these anxieties must be considered a threat to the mental equilibrium of one of the nation's most vulnerable populations—boomer parents—and therefore deserve a closer look.

The good news is that most of this worrying is misplaced. The youth of America, as evidenced by my 12- and 16-year-old sons, are hardly treading

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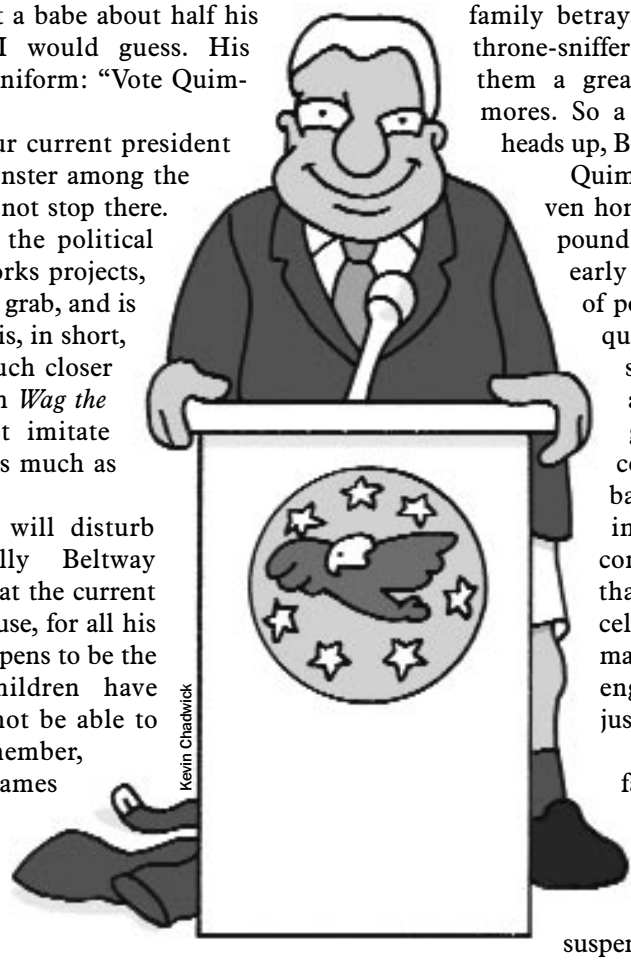
unknown waters here. Quite the contrary. They know just what to make of all this, which is why they've taken to calling the president of the United States by the name Quimby. President Quimby. That's not all bad.

The name comes from a character in *The Simpsons*: Mayor "Diamond" Joe Quimby. For those who don't partake, Diamond Joe is a Kennedy-clone politician who walks like a Kennedy, talks like a Kennedy, and loves like a Kennedy with a fresh annulment under his belt. The Simpson family can hardly open a closet door without encountering the middle-aged pol having at a babe about half his age—right around 21, I would guess. His response to discovery is uniform: "Vote Quimby!"

The resemblance to our current president (known as the Nookie Monster among the *Sesame Street* cohort) does not stop there. Quimby also sways with the political tides, is fond of public-works projects, has a gift for gab as well as grab, and is beyond shaming. Quimby is, in short, an amiable sleaze, and much closer to Clinton than anyone in *Wag the Dog*, whose art does not imitate White House life nearly as much as *The Simpsons* does.

The Quimby linkage will disturb some parents, especially Beltway dwellers, who point out that the current occupant of the White House, for all his abilities to amuse, also happens to be the only president The Children have known. Their kids may not be able to name a single cabinet member, but they do know the names Paula and Gennifer. This, these parents insist, is a calamity.



Well, to a point. Yet others of us (I write from 100 miles south of the Beltway—not far from Kathleen Willey's place, as it happens) have a more refined view. We know that while President Quimby has his shortcomings, he is a pedagogue of the first stripe. We want our children to know that Washington has played a positive role in the world, and in fact continues to do good here and there. Yet we are hard-bitten, tax-gouged, clear-eyed realists who also want our children to understand that Washington is a place where lowlifes gather to exert power over the rest of us, often out of a misplaced sense of moral superiority. Lowlifes like President Quimby and his groveling courtiers.

This lesson is coming through loud and clear. Consider former journalist Sally Quinn, now a Washington fixture. Ms. Quinn went on television early in the scandal to tell my sons that the election of President Quimby proved America had "grown up" about philandering. That is, brazen family betrayal is fully acceptable, a message even Hollywood is hesitant to send in such uncertain terms. All but the most morally dense child knows this message to be false, for they see everywhere the damage done by family betrayal. Hearing a Washington throne-sniffer tell them otherwise teaches them a great deal about Washington mores. So a Gold Star for Sally—and heads up, Ben.

Quimby and Company have driven home another message parents pound into their children from an early age: The opulent clothing of power and prestige are often quite far removed from personal virtue. Or, to put it another way: A baboon can go around in a morning coat, but he remains a baboon. This point is made indelibly as The Children contemplate the likelihood that the president may have celebrated the unmatched majesty of the White House by engaging in bus-station sex just outside the Oval Office.

These days we often go to fanatical lengths to protect the interests of The Children: Not long ago, to give one example, a boy in our local school was suspended for 10 days after being caught possessing an Alka Seltzer, a reflection of the somewhat Islamic "no tolerance" form the anti-drug passion now takes. Similarly, "bad" role models, whether Joe Camel or the Budweiser frogs, are thoroughly demonized.

Yet we have twice put Quimby at the apex of national life, where he and his acolytes mock fidelity, integrity, honesty, and most everything else we tell children is important. Should our youngsters ask why that is, our only response may be: "Shut up and eat your vegetables." ♦

Licensing Liberty

David Lowenthal's Untimely Thoughts on the First Amendment

By Jeremy Rabkin

The title of David Lowenthal's new study of the First Amendment has a decidedly old-fashioned flavor: When he entitles a book *No Liberty for License*, he really means "license," as in acting licentiously. And the book's title is an accurate indication of its contents. Lowenthal spars with the academic legal commentators of twenty or thirty years ago, in order to press home his attack on Supreme Court precedents of fifty to seventy-five years ago, all in order to vindicate constitutional doctrines of one or two hundred years ago. Altogether, this is a very old-fashioned book—which may be why, at this moment, it is particularly timely.

There is something revealing in the fact that the central section of Lowenthal's book is an attack on the judicial doctrine that has emerged over the years concerning obscenity and the First Amendment. An analysis that followed the Constitutional text would have to begin with the topic of religion, as the First Amendment does. An analysis that followed the historical order in which issues reached the Court would only turn to obscenity last. Lowenthal's placement of the topic at the center of his own analysis highlights its importance for him. He demands that obscene publications and entertainments be suppressed by law, not safeguarded by twisted interpretations of the First Amendment.

Jeremy Rabkin teaches constitutional law at Cornell University.

Of course, even in its most liberal phases, the Supreme Court has always refused to extend First Amendment protection to hard-core pornography. But Lowenthal demands much more far-reaching censorship than the Court presently allows. Indeed, he wants to go further than many other conservatives. Harry Clor, for example, published a carefully argued defense of censorship in his 1969 *Obscenity and Public Morality*, which used various lines of moral and philosophical analysis to distinguish the literary artistry of D. H. Lawrence from the dehumanizing commerce of Larry Flynt. Lowenthal has a much simpler solution: Ban *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, and be done with it. Similarly, he denounces Justice Rehnquist's 1974 opinion extending First Amendment protection to the movie *Carnal Knowledge*, a mainstream Hollywood production starring Jack Nicholson and Art Garfunkel. Uninterested in how explicit or artistic the depiction of sex acts may be, Lowenthal wants to ban all literary and visual depictions that promote bad ideas—such as the thought that adultery is acceptable or that "shallow animal sensuality" is harmless and pleasing.

Kevin Chadwick

David Lowenthal
No Liberty for License
The Forgotten Logic of the First Amendment
Spence, 315 pp., $27.95

In order to defend his view, Lowenthal turns to the Founders (and their heirs in the nineteenth century) and shows that they were not at all reluctant to see states and localities impose controls on the press and the arts for the sake of "public morals." Even Jefferson, we learn, derided the sexual mores of the French and warned against influences that would insinuate comparable corruption into American family life. The Supreme Court's 1931 decision in *Near* v. *Minnesota* (famous for identifying "freedom of the press" with freedom from the "prior restraint" of licensing or pre-publication controls) made an explicit exception for controls to protect decency, with an eye to such things as film censorship.

But Lowenthal is not content simply to remind us that earlier generations were less tender about censorship. He wants to vindicate the moral outlook of earlier times and revive the rhetorical accents of those times. So he denounces the "violence, brutality, and sadism pervading the mass media" and warns that "the mass media are the pollutants of the soul, having it in their power to do gradual, often invisible but definite harm by degrading our ways of thinking, our ideals, our character, taste and conduct." So it "would hardly be foolish" to blame movies, TV, and popular music for some part of "the enormous crime rate, . . . the increase in drug use, profanity, illiteracy, . . . the multiplication of sexual crimes, teenage pregnancy, wife-battering, divorce." While many law professors today scoff at the idea that the First Amendment has any connection to truth, for Lowenthal it is about eternal verities.

He displays the same unbendingness in his treatment of seditious speech, which occupies the opening chapters of this book. Here again he shows that for generations after the Founders, people were quite prepared to see punishment of seditious speech and understood this to include even theoretical attacks on fundamental principles of American government. Oliver Wendell Holmes's "clear and present danger test" was not an expression of earlier doctrine but a more or less conscious break with it. The new doctrine—that only imminent danger of violence can justify restraints on speech—didn't become fully established until the 1960s. And here again Lowenthal goes far beyond his fellow conservatives. Walter Berns, taking his cue from Alexis de Tocqueville, argued in his 1976 *The First Amendment and the Future of American Democracy* that the Supreme Court should allow more controls on subversive organizations than on individual malcontents. But Lowenthal rejects this compromise as unprincipled: The lonely crackpot should be as liable to prosecution as the regimented Communist party or the organized Ku Klux Klan.

Not surprisingly, given his abiding concern for protecting public opinion, Lowenthal also seeks to revise current First Amendment doctrine on religion. The last section of his book urges a return to the constitutional outlook of earlier generations, which gave some latitude for government sponsorship of and affiliation with general piety. Lowenthal is emphatic that the First Amendment can give no rights to atheism and that government has no need, therefore, to pretend to neutrality between religion and irreligion. How can it be, he demands, that the First Amendment prohibits public schools from teaching the Declaration of Independence—or endorsing its core teaching about the God-given status of natural rights?

LOWENTHAL IS, ON THE EVIDENCE OF *NO LIBERTY FOR LICENSE*, A MOST IMPOLITIC—AND UNPOLITICAL—MAN.

On all the disputed questions of the 1990s—Are puritanical feminists, with their tirades about sexual harassment and hostile environments a threat to free speech? Are "hate speech" codes on college campuses a threat to the free speech of campus dissenters on affirmative action or on gay rights?—Lowenthal has little to say: His is the old view and the long view. His analysis of religion also demonstrates how little concern he has for contemporary opinion—even contemporary conservative opinion. On government aid to sectarian schools, he asserts that such aid, while not forbidden, must be strictly equal between sects and not merely proportional to numbers (as it would be, for example, in a voucher program, where most money would go to Catholic schools if most children attended religious schools of that description). As it happens, this is the one doctrine in this book that, so far as I am aware, cannot be supported by historical practice or by the thought of the Founders. But whatever its provenance, Lowenthal certainly does not embrace this doctrine in order to pander. Indeed, it is bound to disappoint advocates of greater school choice, who would otherwise be a formidable constituency for revising the Court's current approach to the First Amendment.

Lowenthal, a professor of political philosophy at Boston College, is, on the evidence of this book, a most impolitic—and unpolitical—man. In a concluding chapter he does acknowledge that actually achieving politically tighter controls on obscenity would be "one area" in which his reform program would "face enormous obstacles." But he seems genuinely to think that the rest of his program—excluding Communist political speech from First Amendment protection, reauthorizing prayer in public schools, releasing state and local government from all First Amendment restraints—will be relatively easy.

Based on this book, one has to infer that Professor Lowenthal has no idea of what is politically feasible in this country in this age. Nor does he have any idea what could win five votes on the Supreme Court: No one should look to *No Liberty for License* for a guide to what is likely to succeed as a new constitutional rallying cry and what isn't. But I am unwilling to pursue this line of thought in the man's presence (even his literary presence). In our era of euphemism, evasion, and spin,

where everything is subject to tactical revision and pragmatic readjustment, Lowenthal gives one pause. His moral certitudes are bracing, refreshing—and more than a bit shaming. ♦

Workers of America, Unite?

Russian Commissars, American Communists

By Arnold Beichman

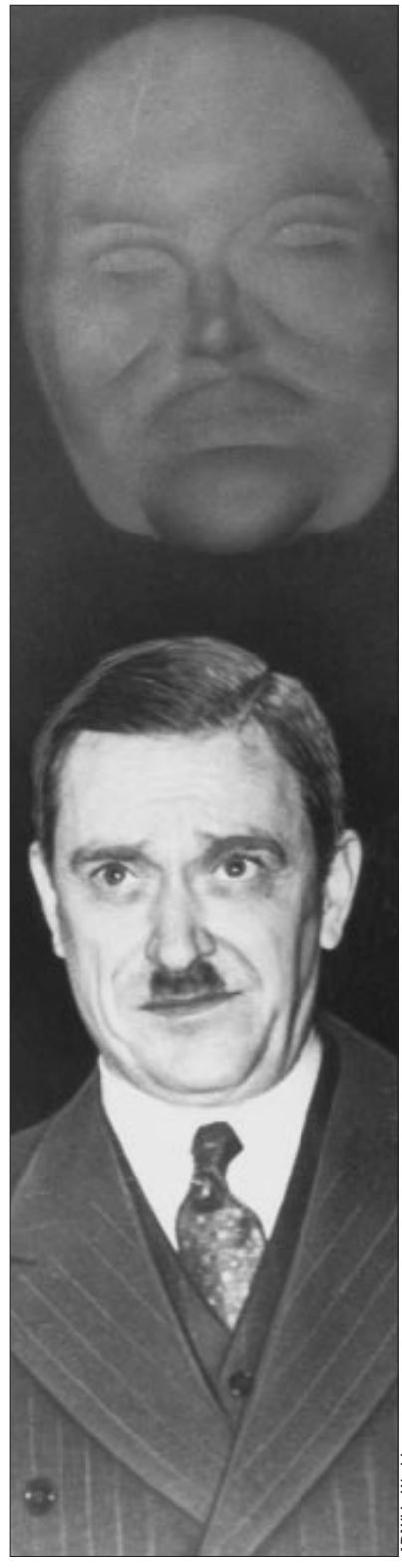
The CPUSA—the Communist party as it existed in the United States—is the only radical party in American history to be governed by a foreign country. It was a form of colonialism, run from the mother country of the Soviet Union, that Stalin called "proletarian internationalism," and it meant that Moscow's orders to its colonials were to be obeyed upon pain of expulsion. Thanks to archives opened in Russia after the fall of the Communists, Harvey Klehr, John Earl Haynes, and Kiril M. Anderson have been able to document beyond all doubt the extent and the viciousness of the role played even in America by the "Comintern," the Soviet agency that ruled Communist parties the world over. *The Soviet World of American Communism* takes its place as yet another fine entry in Yale University Press's extraordinary series of recent books on the history of the Communist plague in the twentieth century.

Harvey Klehr, John Earl Haynes, and Kiril M. Anderson
The Soviet World of American Communism
Yale University Press, 416 pp., $35

Throughout the very early years of the CPUSA, the Soviet Union hoped to foment the overthrow of American capitalism. But when, during the 1920s, even the apparatchiks in Moscow realized that "Soviet America" was no longer an immediately realizable ambition, the Comintern directed the CPUSA to perform instead two much more clandestine roles: enlisting popular support for Soviet foreign policy and recruiting key Americans for Moscow's espionage apparatus.

Klehr, Haynes, and Anderson have gathered the key correspondence between the Comintern and the CPUSA, and readers will find much to be depressed about as they plow through the endless record of duplicity, naiveté, and treason. But perhaps the most depressing thing found in *The Soviet World of American Communism* is the final confirmation of what has long been known: that, upon joining the CPUSA, the ostensibly independent Americans—intellectuals and workers alike—became as submissive to Moscow as members of the Nazi German-American Bund were to Berlin (and the Bund, at least, made no pretense of being a political party or anything other than a pressure group for a foreign power). When Stalin's spokesmen issued orders, party members obeyed without a murmur.

Perhaps the most surprising feature of the history of American communism is how well the Soviets did



AP/Wide World

1930s American Communist leader Earl Browder at Madison Square Garden, under a giant deathmask of Lenin.

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in the United States, given the often idiotic orders issued to the CPUSA by Russians, Bulgarians, Rumanians, and any other Eastern European whose expertise on America derived entirely from Stalin's paranoid perceptions, the misreporting of the Soviet press, and occasional comments in the works of Marx and Lenin.

You had to be a special kind of American to submit to it all, and it seemed to work best among the intellectuals. Among the trade unions and their members, the mishmash offered under Soviet orders by the CPUSA had little success, and *The Soviet World of American Communism* shows—with Comintern documentation to prove it—that were it not for John L. Lewis and Sidney Hillman, the two labor leaders who founded the CIO, there probably wouldn't have been any CPUSA success among the trade unionists. One of the Comintern's stupidest decisions was the creation of dual unions—coal miners, garment workers—to challenge the jurisdiction of the equivalent unions already in the American Federation of Labor. The tactic was a total failure and made mortal enemies of the leaders of the AFL.

Nonetheless, looking back, one is forced to agree that the CPUSA did remarkably well in securing unconditional approval for Soviet foreign policy aims from such non-Communist Americans as Henry Wallace, Joseph E. Davies, Vera Micheles Dean, Claude Pepper—the list is endless. So too the party did quite well in espionage recruitment, finding Alger Hiss, J. Robert Oppenheimer, Whittaker Chambers, Lee Pressman, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, and many more.

Even more remarkable is the extent to which the highest-ranking American Communists were not just willing but *eager* to submit to a Comintern leadership whose strategies were stupid, ill-informed, and in some cases disastrous (from a Kremlin standpoint). Under the Leninist doctrine of "democratic centralism," Moscow's always infallible commands had to be obeyed no matter how irreconcilable these policies and slogans were with actual American conditions. But the Comintern documents found by Klehr, Haynes, and Anderson show the CPUSA leaders gladly doing whatever was asked of them. Stalin, for example, once produced a slogan intended to win African-American support for communism ("Self-determination for the Black Belt"), insisting that American blacks south of the Mason-Dixon line were ready to revolt against whites, take over all the Southern states, and proclaim a Soviet-style republic. And dutiful CPUSA organizers were immediately shipped south to organize the unlikely rebellion.

AP/Wide World

Browder harangues the CPUSA faithful in Boston, 1936.

A new "party line" came down from the Comintern in 1931. To implement Stalin's doctrine of "social fascism," social democrats like the one-time leader of the American Socialist party, Norman Thomas, were henceforth to be denounced as "social fascist" enemies. The comrades, led by CPUSA Secretary Earl Browder, obeyed without a murmur. (In 1933, this international "social fascism" line, which barred united efforts with social democrats, helped bring Hitler to power in Germany.) When the same Comintern proclaimed a "Popular Front" to fight fascism in 1936, Norman Thomas went from "social fascist" to hallowed social democrat. "Our line has changed again," went a contemporary socialist parody of the Negro spiritual with the choral reply: "Ah knows it, Browder. Ah knows it, Browder. Our line has changed again."

The ability of American Communists to swallow the Soviet line seems to have been endless. The Moscow "show trials" of the 1930s were defended as Stalin heroically cleaning out Nazi spies like Trotsky, while the executions, assassinations, and the Gulag were declared more than justified. When Stalin and Hitler proclaimed their non-aggression pact in 1939, World War II became for the Communists an "imperialist" war. Everything, including political strikes against arms manufacturing plants, was done to sabotage the Allied war effort. The CPUSA even cheered the fall of France in June 1940 as a victory against "imperialism." But when

Hitler attacked the USSR in June 1941, the war overnight became a war against fascism.

In 1946, Stalin opened the cold war against "imperialism." Its first victim was Browder, the CPUSA secretary who had abjectly complied with every Comintern zig and zag for twenty years. Browder was expelled in disgrace by his own comrades because an article in a French Communist party magazine accused him of betraying the proletarian cause with his "Popular Front" slogan, "Communism is Twentieth Century Americanism." (The French, it should be noted, had the one Western Communist party that beat even the Americans in obeying slavishly Stalin's orders.)

In recent years, a number of writers—both popular and academic—have undertaken to whitewash both Stalin and the CPUSA members who so willingly submitted to his demands. A few months ago there appeared in the Sunday Magazine of the *New York Times* a full-page apologia by a self-proclaimed "red diaper baby": Her parents may not have exercised good judgment by becoming party members—but at least they "believed in something." In a recent essay in the *New York Review of Books*, the historian Theodore Draper rightly denounced such popular exculpation of communism, together with its surviving academic defenders. There is, he wrote, "clearly an attempt to rehabilitate communism by making it part of the larger family of socialism and democracy. No one would think of doing this favor for fascism, but communism with even more millions of victims and a much longer life span is the beneficiary of this sustained effort of historical rehabilitation in—of all places—American colleges and universities."

One wants to say that Klehr, Haynes, and Anderson have provided, with their superb annotation, enough to make impossible any such rehabilitation. But the history of communism in America demonstrates the heartbreaking capacity of some intellectuals to believe almost anything—and, worse yet, to act on it. For every other reader, however, *The Soviet World of American Communism* will prove that there isn't a single good word to be said for the Communist Party USA. Not one. ♦

B&A

Dreams of Araby

Fouad Ajami & the Future of the Islamic Past

By David Pryce-Jones

For the best part of half a century, the Arabs have been fully independent, with the chance to make political and social choices for themselves. Oil wealth gave them a colossal windfall, and their religion, their language, and the memory of their great past ought to have coalesced into a confident identity—retaining their inherited structures or adapting them as they see fit.

Instead, every contemporary Arab state has an absolute ruler, with a base in his family, tribe, or sect, extending to the army and secret police. Power changes hands only through death, sometimes natural but often from coup and assassination. There is no innovative science, medicine, or philosophy. Any suggestion of pluralism or power-sharing is enough to threaten or even induce civil or external war.

Fouad Ajami
The Dream Palace of the Arabs
Pantheon, 344 pp., $26

Whatever has gone wrong? Who, or what, is to blame for this state of affairs? Arab writers and apologists have a long list of foreign culprits, beginning with Israel, the United States, and that all-purpose entity known as "the West." In such a perspective, Arabs appear the innocent victims of the malignancy of other people. If only they were left to themselves, they would duly modernize.

In his latest important work, Fouad Ajami explodes this illusion. Nearly two decades ago, in *The Arab Predicament*, he was already speaking of a deep and terrifying breakdown of Arab society. The pages of *The Dream Palace of the Arabs* are similarly filled with words like "despair," "cruelty," "waste," and "bankruptcy." The past involved undoubted deprivations, poverty, and hunger. But there was at least a cultural wholeness about it—and Ajami mourns the loss of that wholeness in elegiac prose, for the present is unbearable.

There are first-rate intellectuals among the Arabs, and Ajami is the first to recognize it. But responsibility for the breakdown principally falls upon this educated elite, who have not risen to the task of analyzing their society. This is a failure of the intellect, and from it stem the many symptoms of disorder.

Conditions have not been easy, to be sure. Absolute rulers have killers, jailers, and censors on the payroll. But in tacit complicity with those who tyrannize over them, Arab intellectuals have fashioned and applauded empty doctrines: first nationalism, and then Islamic fundamentalism. These doctrines have nothing to contribute to progress. They are vain

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dreams—Ajami's "Dream Palace"—of power and glory, of consolation, and revenge for grievances more imaginary than real, and this triumph of emotion over reason has politicized and degraded the entire Arab world.

For Ajami, Arabs have only themselves to blame if they prefer dream palaces to the hard work of social construction. Nobody is forcing anything on them. But until they examine truthfully the causes and effects of absolutism, custom, and backwardness, they cannot settle on an identity and create the culture worthy of them. Unable to go backward or forward, they have been doing violence to themselves, psychologically and physically.

The Dream Palace of the Arabs has enough autobiographical underpinning to show how Ajami resolved the crisis of identity for himself, quite exceptionally. He is a Shiah from south Lebanon, where his community was in the majority, but traditionally downtrodden. His family had some land in a village, and they grew tobacco. As a boy, he played about in the ruins of a nearby Crusader castle. Neither he nor his friends attended the local mosque: "We were not a religious breed."

Coming to political awareness in the heyday of Gamal Abdel Nasser and the Suez campaign of 1956, he was like so many others formed by what he calls "an amorphous Arab nationalist sensibility." Although he knew Muslim West Beirut in its heyday, he left for America at the age of eighteen and is today a distinguished professor at Johns Hopkins University. But he is still immersed in the Arab experience and determined to elucidate it—in anecdotes, quotations from literature, interviews, anything that reveals the ebb and flow of contemporary Arab public opinion. Discursive, elliptical, highly particular, this is the testimony of a free spirit and a tour de force.

A third of Ajami's book is taken up with an account of the life and death of Khalil Hawi, a Lebanese poet and once something of a household name. Here was someone whose life and death seem to represent the complete Arab condition. Born a member of the Greek Orthodox community, he too belonged to a minority, and he becomes, in *The Dream Palace of the Arabs*, the type of man Ajami himself might have become, had he stayed in Lebanon. Originally a poor villager, he worked as a stonemason and cobbler, before obtaining a scholarship to the American University of Beirut. Eventually he was to teach literature there, with academic interludes in England and America.

On the surface, Khalil Hawi was a successful, self-made man with a social conscience. But he had fallen early under the influence of a charismatic adventurer, Anton Saadeh, the founder of a party advocating a Greater Syrian nationalism. A famous poem of Hawi's entitled "The Bridge" rhapsodized about Arab culture and unity.

In sober fact, Saadeh derived his beliefs from Hitler's Nazism, and he ended, predictably enough, before a firing-squad—leaving Hawi himself a marked man for a time.

But Hawi continued his enthusiastic nationalism: "Let me know if Arab unity is achieved; if I am dead, send someone to my graveside to tell me of it when it is realized." The Six Day War of 1967, the deadlock of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the collapse of Lebanon, bitterly proved that Hawi's aspirations had no foundation in reality. Fired by hopes of messianic salvation, he had politicized and spoiled a genuine poetic gift. On the day in 1982 that Israel invaded Beirut, he committed suicide.

In the eyes of some Arabs, Hawi remains a martyr. But Ajami makes it clear that he ought to be a cautionary tale instead. Hawi had simply made a series of judgments so willful that they were altogether unbalanced. Arab nationalism was dangerous to those who subscribed to it—not merely to Hawi but also to the huge majority of Arabs who had fallen under the sway of charismatic leaders of the type of Nasser: the Hafez Assads and the Saddam Husseins. Arousing expectations incapable of fulfillment, Arab nationalism involved a mass deception. Pretensions to justice and equality found their conclusion, suicidally indeed, in repression and frustration.

The Dream Palace of the Arabs includes another self-contained essay of about eighty pages, in which Ajami turns to the phenomenon of Islamic fundamentalism, ostensibly the opposite of nationalism, but actually its Siamese twin: another would-be revolution born out of a sense of inferiority and defeat. Like nationalism, Islamic fundamentalism professed to be establishing unity. But in a dark corner of the dream palace, Ayatollah Khomeini and his kind were concocting another "false gift" for the masses.

In the name of Islam—but in fact in mockery of Arab culture and religion—cities and countries have foundered in blood.

As a writer, Ajami is specially distressed that Arabic itself has been so abused in the service of absolutism that this great language no longer communicates truth. He gives tragicomic examples of writers who have simply reversed their opinions to fit the twists and turns of tyrannical power.

Ajami sees Egypt as the key to the future. The economy cannot keep pace with the rising population. Islamic terrorists attack the Coptic minority and destabilize the government. The situation, however, may not be as grave as it looks. Nasser's successors have undone much of his mischief. Newspapers may have become unreadable, and books are less resonant than before, but a sound intellectual tradition survives. There is a middle class with much to lose. In due course, Ajami suggests, Islamic fundamentalists will also be obli-

ged to come to terms with reality, and a pluralist society will emerge in Egypt.

At the end of *The Dream Palace of the Arabs*, Ajami discusses reactions to the 1993 Oslo accords signed by Israel and the Palestinians. Some of the most eminent Arab intellectuals (including Neguib Mahfouz, the one Arab Nobel Prize winner in literature) had already perceived Israel for what it is: a small country of no great account to the Arabs. But the mere idea of peace sent other equally eminent intellectuals (the American-Palestinian Edward Said, for example, and the poets Nizar Qabbani and Mahmoud Darwish) scurrying back into the dream palace, once more to indulge in expectations which can be fulfilled only in war and ruin. They were unable either to learn or to forget.

Ajami knows that self-examination and the power of the intellect alone can liberate the Arabs. In the present Arab world, this conclusion is likely to be met with shamefaced silence or even outrage and scandal. But Arab intellectuals will find themselves unable to revile the name of Fouad Ajami without thereby apologizing for absolutism and tyranny. In *The Dream Palace of the Arabs*, he has had the courage and vision to tell people what they must hear for their own good. Great is the truth, we must hope, and it will prevail. ♦

Is There Such an Animal?

An American Woman Composer

By Jay Nordlinger

Every now and then, a piece by Ruth Crawford Seeger will appear on a concert program, most likely at a vocal recital. The singer will be an American, and she will also be a woman—for Crawford was an American female composer, and in music, as elsewhere, people like to feel that they are helping their own. The late mezzo-soprano Jan DeGaetani, for example, took care to offer her audiences a few Crawford songs, convinced not only that she was performing worthy music but that she was doing her bit for the cause.

Crawford, whose life spanned the first half of this century, is frequently hailed as the most important woman composer in American history. There are, of course, more exalted distinctions. Crawford, to her credit, never wished to be noted for her sex, even to the point of refusing to join women's musical organizations. It pleased her when her work was described as "masculine" or "virile" (which it is). Her friend and fellow composer Henry Cowell commented that her violin sonata was utterly devoid of the "undesirable sentimentality" that "so often destroys the creative efforts of women composers."

Judith Tick
Ruth Crawford Seeger
A Composer's Search for American Music
Oxford University Press, 457 pp., $40

Judith Tick, a professor at Northeastern University who has made a specialty of women in music, has now given us a biography of Crawford—"my kind of heroine," she confides in her preface, "a modern woman whom I understand." Readers may well approach the book with skepticism: It is the work of an academic writer steeped in gender studies, and it concerns a largely neglected composer who, during the Stalinist era, made herself a tool of the Communist party. Yet *Ruth Crawford Seeger: A Composer's Search for American Music* is a clear success—a finely drawn portrait of a woman in a man's profession, an illuminating chronicle of a composer's development, and a learned analysis of the struggle to fashion a genuinely American music.

Crawford was born in 1901 along the Ohio-West Virginia border. The daughter and granddaughter of Methodist ministers, she was reared on a flinty practicality—the kind, she later suggested, that forbade the growing of flowers, "because you couldn't eat them." Throughout her life, she was to feel a "straddler of two worlds," caught between the values of her youth and the radicalism of her musical and political beliefs. On her sixth birthday, she experienced two events that remained in her memory: learning to darn socks and going to her first piano lesson. As a teenager, she was by far the most promising girl in Jacksonville, Florida (to which the family had moved), filling notebooks with remarkably mature poems and discovering the master composers.

In 1921, Crawford struck out for Chicago and the American Conservatory of Music. There, she encountered the thrilling innovations of Scriabin, Debussy, and Stravinsky. She was only an adequate pianist, but she showed a startling gift for composition, amazing her teacher, Adolf Weidig, with the freshness of her experiments: "Every time you come into my studio," he told her, "you bring me renewed proof that there is something in you." Crawford had a plain realization that composers belonged to a higher species than performers, an insight that does not occur to every musician. In a poem to a pianist friend, she wrote, *You are the lover of the creations of God, the buds*

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and the green things. . . . But I . . . shall myself be a god, . . . creat[ing] trees of sound and color.

Before long, Crawford fell in with a group of theosophists and would-be mystics, fashionably imbibing Lao Tse and the *Bhagavad Gita*. She exclaimed in her diary, "I curse myself for my English reserve." She was particularly impressed by the strange composer Dane Rudhyar, who condemned harmony as "tribal" and glorified atonality as "universal." Rudhyar favored allowing the hands to fall on the keyboard "at random," thereby finding true composition. Crawford later admitted that, under the tutelage of this flighty guru, she "scorned counterpoint for two years." But she was also making a name for herself, attracting the attention of more established avant-gardists such as Cowell, Leo Ornstein, and Edgard Varèse. By 1926, she was on the board of the New Music Society, which was dedicated to "progressive tendencies."

At about this time, Crawford met Carl Sandburg, the "people's troubadour," who sought a piano teacher for his daughters. Crawford soon became a virtual member of the family and collaborated with Sandburg on his *American Songbag*, a hugely successful anthology of folk music. Crawford went on to compose numerous settings of Sandburg's poems, including the 1929 "White Moon." She also approved of Sandburg's social sensibility, remarking that he was "right to search among down-and-outers for underlying poetry," being "ten times more likely to find it there than in more polite circles."

In the summer of 1929, Crawford stayed at the MacDowell Colony (the artistic village overseen by the widow of the composer Edward MacDowell), conversing at mealtime with the likes of E. A. Robinson, Thornton Wilder, and Edward Dahlberg and contemplating her future. Her mother had died the year before, after a hideous illness, through which Crawford served as primary nurse. As early as 1923, the young composer had asked, "To whom is my duty greater—my mother or what talent I possess?" She had reproached herself unmercifully for what she considered her failings as a daughter, writing in 1927, "How much of a . . . superior, blustering, impatient-at-feminine-foibles, fount-of-knowledge *man* I am becoming with mother. . . . Why, a man-hating feminist author could almost write me up as a type." Now, she agonized over whether she would be able to enjoy, as she put it, "both a 'career' and a life."

Still uncertain, Crawford found her way to New York, where she had

Deutsche Grammophon

Ruth Crawford Seeger, at nineteen

the luck to be installed in the home of Blanche Walton, a patroness of new music. Mrs. Walton's salon was a mecca for the musically daring: "The crowd, the meeting of friends and rivals, the ice cream and prohibition wine!" the wealthy dowager wrote. "My affairs draw all the best of the composers and musicians in New York." Among them was the musicologist and sometime composer Charles Seeger, a married man with three sons (one of them Pete Seeger, who would go on to found The Weavers and become the country's best-known leftist folksinger). Charles was to become Crawford's teacher, partner, and husband. In the meantime, she was applying for a Guggenheim Fellowship, hoping to travel and work in Europe. When Rudhyar recommended the female composer to the foundation, a question came back: "Is there such an animal?"

There was, and she soon set sail for Berlin. While on the continent, Crawford refined her style and conferred with advanced musical thinkers like Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg, and Albert Roussel. The debate about what sort of music America should have was growing heated, with Cowell maintaining that jazz and its half-classical manifestations were nothing but "Negro Music seen through the eyes of Tin Pan Alley Jews." George Gershwin and Aaron Copland had mere "pretensions of writing the authentic American music" in contrast to such "true Americans as the Anglo-Saxon Charles Ives and Carl Ruggles" (an example of the anti-Semitism to which Crawford herself was not entirely immune).

Meanwhile, Crawford and Seeger were pursuing their courtship by mail, exploring delicate issues such as whether fidelity was appropriate to an enlightened relationship. "In spite of our modern heads," Seeger sighed, "our hearts still speak for constancy." Crawford rejoiced that, in Seeger, she had found the "unseparateable mixture of work and love" that she had longed for—"a terribly romantic old-fashioned idea for a modern young woman to have." When Crawford returned home, Seeger divorced his first wife, and the lovers married, after the requisite six-week residency in Nevada.

Then, back in New York, the tragedy of Crawford's life—personal and musical—struck: She succumbed to communism, that great killer of the artistic spirit. Charles and Ruth joined the musicians' Pierre Degeyter Club (named for the composer of the *Internationale*), and Crawford, who had only recently achieved a professional breakthrough

with a profound string quartet, was soon writing obnoxious ditties with titles like *Sacco, Vanzetti*, and *Chinaman, Laundryman*. The slogan of the Workers Music League was "Music as a Weapon in the Class Struggle," and the *Worker Musician* rallied the faithful "For proletarian music, for the defense of the Soviet Union, for a Soviet America." Seeger, who had been an acclaimed scholar of music, contributed a regular column to the *Daily Worker*, declaring in one of them, "Music is propaganda—always propaganda—and of the most powerful sort."

The writer Mike Gold proclaimed that "songs are as necessary to the fighting movement as bread," and even Copland served up *Into the Streets, May 1st!* Crawford tried to maintain a little distance, mocking herself as "Krawford the Kommunist," but she still swallowed the line that classical music was for the elites and therefore deprived herself of what, from childhood, she had regarded as her high calling.

Deutsche Grammophon

Crawford teaching folk songs to schoolchildren, 1948

In 1935, Charles Seeger secured a job with a New Deal agency, training musicians for placement in the distressed communities of the South. This led to Crawford's second career—that of folklorist. The Seegers were introduced to the archivist John Lomax and his son Alan in Washington, D.C., and the two families teamed to promote folk music as the genuine voice of America. Crawford, being the most talented of the bunch, handled the song transcriptions and arrangements, spending the 1940s producing such volumes as *Our Singing Country*, *Folk Song U.S.A.*, and several collections for children.

In the meantime, she was—in her words—"composing babies," giving birth to four, to go with her three stepchildren. Their home, for years, contained only folk instruments, and Ruth Crawford, who had once stirred a fair portion of America's classical-music establishment, was reduced to preparing *The Burl Ives-Ruth Seeger Piano Songbook*.

Crawford was well aware that her original dreams had gone unfulfilled. She wrote plaintively that "we should not forget that it is also important to write music for the few." In 1949, after a hiatus of almost two decades, she suddenly began to compose again. One of her daughters later recalled that her mother had simply sat down and started to write in a way that none of the children could recognize. Three years later, Crawford noticed an advertisement for a competition and, throwing off ideological restraints, composed a wind quintet for it. Naturally, the piece won, and Crawford, resuscitated, wrote to her friend Ruggles, "I believe I'm going to work again . . . If I live to be ninety-nine as my grandfather did, that gives me forty-eight more years."

She had, in fact, only one more year. As she was dying, she complained, "It isn't fair. I am just getting back to composing." According to her stepson Pete—whose fame was then eclipsing Crawford's—"she didn't go gentle at all." She had given the middle years of her life to her politics, her husband, and her family, and she was at last ready to resume the course she had charted as a girl, when, like all born composers, she had encountered the world as a place of sound.

Crawford lived fifty-two years, but composed seriously for only about ten of them. Even her most advanced pieces—her violin sonata, her string quartet, her *Study in Mixed Accents* for piano—seem mere preludes to more substantial work to come. She never got around to the forms—a concerto, a symphony—that she knew separated major composers from minor ones. Would she have developed into a first-tier composer? Perhaps not, but she would almost surely have attained the level of, say, Elliott Carter, an interesting atonalist with a strong American current.

Instead, she opted for a cold and stifling husband who envied his wife's superior talents and a cold and stifling political doctrine that condemned classical composition as evil. The biographer Judith Tick does not always draw the conclusions demanded by her own evidence, but she paints a compelling picture, allowing us to understand a pioneer who might have been much, much more than an affirmative-action curiosity. ♦

"I was there at the beginning, I kissed that girl's inner thighs when she was six days old."
—Monica Lewinsky's lawyer William Ginsburg, on his relationship with his client.
Quoted in Time, *March 2, 1998*

Parody

The following is a facsimile copy of a page from the private notebooks of William Ginsburg. This page is reproduced in Ginsburg: The Pre-Institutionalization Years *(Harvard Medical School Press, 3 Vols., 2007.)*

March 10, 1998

I'm having trouble sleeping again. I watch reruns of myself on Charles Grodin. It's 2:00 a.m. I call Judy ~~Woodruff~~ ~~Woodruff~~ Woodruff. She seems to have changed her number. Why am I only invited to studios during the daytime? Why won't Tom Snyder answer his pager?

Monica won't be awake for another six hours. How can she desert me? I kissed her armpits when she was three weeks old. Her parents turned off the video camera when I did it. That haunts me. I should have suspected my copy of ~~Piaget~~ Piaget was bogus when I saw it had a centerfold. Who can say what is normal and abnormal in this world? Who can say what is true or not true? Certainly not me. I am beyond linear thinking. Why does Ken Starr remind me of a penguin? Are they smiling in Jerusalem? Don't cry for me Argentina. Damn, it's still only 2:10.

My fundraising appeal has not yielded much revenue. Monica's father doesn't make as much as I thought from his company, House o' Tumor. Clinton has a defense fund. And he's the guilty one. Or maybe he isn't. Some say yes. Some say no. You say hello. I say goodbye. I am woman, hear me roar. The Captain and Tenille never got the respect they deserved. ~~Muskrat Love~~ ~~Love Will Keep Us Together~~. The Captain is a misogynist if he mistreated Tenille. But maybe he didn't. Maybe Tenille was born without a first name.

What's the point of having a 24-hour news network if these people won't pick up their phone? These reporters wouldn't even be able to hound us properly if I didn't constantly tip them off. Sometimes I think I should quit the law, but then again I need the legal pads. Mike McCurry doesn't call me much either. His last name suggests he is half Irish, half Indian. But it's Wolf Blitzer that tees me off the most. I remember when he used to call me. Now he never calls. The creep. It wasn't so long ago he was taking me to basketball games. That was cool. He laughed when I confided that every morning I floss to Gershwin tunes. Now it seems to him I was just another talking head. Schmucko. Yet I saw him on Inside Politics wearing that tie I gave him. I don't know why his name is Wolf. I'm the lone wolf. I howl at the moon. Ooowwwww