AS THE WORLD VOTES
MICHAEL BARONE

the weekly
Standard

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MISSING

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BPA INTERNATIONAL

The Beijing Games People Play

Late last week, as expected, the world's largest dictatorship was awarded the honor of hosting the 2008 summer Olympic games. Friday in Moscow, the International Olympic Committee made quick work of bids from Toronto, Istanbul, Paris, and Osaka, and voted instead to hold the event in Beijing.

Sure, there'd been some concern about China's plan to stage the beach volleyball competition in Tiananmen Square, right where the bodies fell during 1989's massacre of pro-democracy demonstrators. But—see how reasonable they are?—the Beijing organizing committee agreed to relocate the artificial sand pit.

True, too, there remain a few health nuts among Olympic track and field athletes who worry that Beijing's notorious air pollution—more days than not, you can hardly see a hundred yards in the smog—might, oh, collapse a lung or two during the marathon, for example. And IOC aides acknowledge in private that China's housing and transportation problems make the 2008 Games a potential disaster. And some people continue to fuss about that, you know, human rights stuff.

But that's all small potatoes. To have lost the games, Canadian Olympic official Paul Henderson explained, "Beijing [would've] had to make a major mistake."

Like antagonizing the United States into actively opposing its Olympic bid? Would that such a thing were possible. Amnesty International reports that China has summarily executed nearly 2,000 "undesirables" in the past three months. Falun Gong representatives report that China has recently murdered several dozen of their colleagues. And Beijing itself announced that it will try several falsely accused Americans for the capital crime of espionage.

None of this caused anyone in Washington to blink. There was Clinton administration national security adviser Sandy Berger on the op-ed page of the *Washington Post*, for example, urging us to understand that the "world looks different from China." A "bifurcated policy of economic engagement and political hostility is unsustainable," Berger concluded. So we should never be hostile, in other words. No matter what the Chinese do.

Incidentally, the author of this little appeasement essay, besides his government service, is a high-dollar adviser to corporations doing business in China, just back from a trip to Beijing. Republican leaders of the House of Representatives, who last week blocked a vote on a non-binding resolution condemning Beijing's Olympic bid, do not get paid by the China lobby, of course. So THE SCRAPBOOK wonders, What's their excuse? ♦

Are you now, or have you ever been, from Milwaukee?

Last week, the city that's home to some of America's greatest symbols of capitalism and freedom (Miller beer, Harley-Davidson) hosted the annual convention of the Communist Party, USA. The commies were pumped as they kicked things off with a spirited rendition of "Solidarity Forever." The excitement peaked when Daisy Cubais, an aide to Milwaukee mayor John Norquist, read to the gathering a welcome letter from Norquist. Wisconsinites, Norquist writes, are "widely known for our socialist traditions." And, he continues, "in that sense, we share many things in common with the long history of the Communist Party and all those engaged in the fight for a


Office of the Mayor

Proclamation

decent life for working families." What's more, "if we, the people, work together, we can win the struggle to better the lives of ordinary working people. The Communist Party, USA has shown its dedication to this goal in its efforts to strengthen the labor movement, combat the critical situation of poverty, hunger, unemployment and racial discrimination as well as its efforts to save our environment."

Yeah, right. The crowd of nearly 500 gave a standing ovation.

Steve Filmanowicz, Norquist's spokesman, is eager to clarify. The welcome, he says, was written by an overenthusiastic staffer, and Norquist "wasn't around to sign off on the letter." Norquist is often to the right of most Democrats on issues, Filmanowicz continues, and the letter was basically sent to recognize "work that some members of the party have done on labor issues." Besides, he says, Norquist can't be a commie-sympathizer because he wrote a book in which "he quotes Milton Friedman four times and Karl Marx not once." ♦

Stem Cell Demagogues

The Juvenile Diabetes Foundation has just produced a beautiful, moving television ad. It's about a pretty, lively little girl named Samantha—and the evil people who want her to keep suffering from diabetes. You might wonder who, exactly, is in *favor* of juvenile diabetes. Well, the ad makes it clear: The people who oppose the use of stem cells. And even though "stem cell research has broad support . . . across the country," these people are using "politics"—*politics*, mind you—to "prevent a breakthrough in medical science." So we had all better telephone President Bush this minute to record our support for stem cell research.

THE SCRAPBOOK could make that phone call. So could everybody else in America, because there isn't anyone involved in the debate who opposes stem cell research. Adult and other nonembryonic stem cell research has shown potential for treating diabetes, and everybody is glad. But that's not what the Samantha ad is really about. What the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation wants you to do is phone the president to register your support for *embryonic* stem cell research, a word that never appears in the ad. This is what disingenuousness looks like in the debate over embryonic stem cells. If you'd prefer that stem cells were obtained nondestructively from adults, if you think that there's something creepy about creating human embryos for the purpose of destroying them to extract their stem cells (the kind of research, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, that the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation has already given $650,000 to support in Spain), why, then, you must want little Samantha to suffer forever. Funny, the usual watchdogs of political advertising haven't barked on this one. ♦

Nightmare on Pennsylvania Avenue

In the most recent impartial contribution to human knowledge to emerge from Berkeley, California, a new study has found that Republicans have more nightmares. Noted dream researcher Kelly Bulkeley, Ph.D., presented his findings on July 11 to the 18th Annual International Conference of the Association for the Study of Dreams. His study, based on a poll of visitors to his website, found that half of the self-reported dreams of Republicans were classified as nightmares, while just 18 percent of liberals' dreams were. As UPI reports, Bulkeley, whose previous work includes "Political Dreaming: Dreams of the 1992 Presidential Election," claimed that "Democratic nightmares are tempered by the very principles Democrats claim to espouse—hope, power, and positive action." Republicans, on the other hand, "inhabit scarier dreamlands" characterized by "aggression, misfortune, and physical threats."

We eagerly await further findings, in which Republicans tend, on average, to display an unusual degree of loathing for bunnies and fuzzy kittens. ♦

Casual

Funeral for a Friend

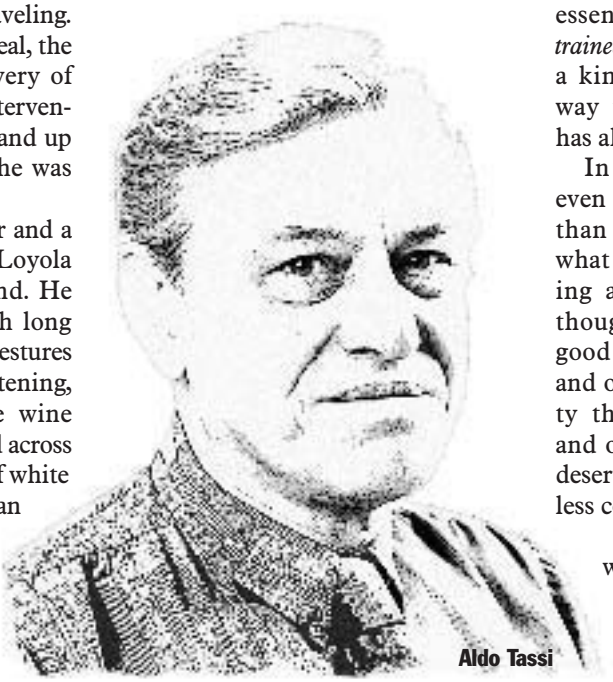
I meant to ask Aldo what he thought about Restoration comedy: Wycherly, Congreve, Steele, and Sheridan; all those sly, quick-witted plays with titles like *The Way of the World* and *The School for Scandal*. I meant to call him on the phone for a long conversation or even—why not?—take a few hours off one day and drive up to Baltimore for lunch.

But one day always seemed to turn into some other day, and he slipped away this winter while I was traveling. The sore throat that wouldn't heal, the visit to the doctor, the discovery of cancer, the massive medical interventions, the heart that couldn't stand up against them. Within weeks, he was gone, at 67 years old.

Aldo Tassi was a philosopher and a prize-winning playwright at Loyola College in Baltimore, Maryland. He was a barrel-chested man with long arms that would swing in big gestures as he talked, perpetually threatening, but never quite spilling, the wine glasses and coffee cups scattered across the table. He had a thick mop of white hair and one of those fine Italian faces that seem to get only finer—handsomer, more filled with character—as they fall to ruin. And his mind was like the attic in an old house, a magnificent jumble stacked with boxes of antique photographs, towers of forgotten books, and ancient steamer trunks you longed for an afternoon to rummage through.

He had a philosophical system, as well, a metaphysical intuition that somehow brought order to it all: the playwriting, the Thomistic philosophy in which he had been brought up, the sociology that dominated intellectual life in America when he came of age, the Platonic dialogues that were his real love, and the endless stream of novels he consumed.

I didn't understand it fully; he never produced a complete expression of his thought. But it involved what Hans Urs von Balthasar called "theodrama," and it filled his conversation. "God is the playwright," he'd say, "and we're the actors." That's not predetermination, a denial of free will, any more than Shakespeare predetermines how *Hamlet* is performed. Still, Aldo seemed mostly to think that what God intends for us is a comedy. Life only looks like a tragedy because we flub our lines so badly, and in the wings the Author stands, shaking his head in dismay.



Aldo Tassi

He deserved better than the feeble turnout of faculty members Loyola managed to pull together for his obsequies during the semester break. We really have a duty to go to funerals—a duty not just to the surviving family, but to the dead themselves. Funerals are their last appearances, their positively final performances, before the curtain comes down forever, and we owe it to them to buy a ticket.

Besides, Catholic colleges have a particular duty to remember the generation of professors now passing away, the last group educated in the old Scholastic *ratio studiorum* and sharpened, as young men, like arrows before the Jesuits loosed them on the world. No matter how far they later fell into modern thought, they never lost the intellectual tools in which they were first schooled. It's not that they still lived in a Thomistic world. It is, rather, that their minds remained Thomistic minds, and you couldn't listen to them talk about anything—tulips, Shakespeare, politics—without hearing them order the subject by genus and species, mark the difference between form and matter, and point out the real distinction between essence and existence. They had *trained* minds, and there was a logic, a kind of mental cleanness, to the way they thought that, nowadays, has almost disappeared.

In an odd way, that made them even better with other people's ideas than with their own. To tell Aldo what one was working on or thinking about was to have one's half-thought notions lifted up, given a good shake, put in the right order, and offered back with far more clarity than they originally possessed, and often far more clarity than they deserved. It made for a rather breathless conversation.

I hadn't seen Aldo Tassi and his wife Nina for more than a year before he died. I had thought, in my sloppy way, that there would be time—time enough to run up to see him, time later to pass an idea or two by him, time sometime or other to find out how Restoration comedies fit in his system. "Can we come back?" my daughter asked as we drove home from our last trip to Baltimore. And I said yes, but the answer was no. We can never come back to find things as we left them, unlost and unchanged despite our absence. My failure was one Aldo could have helped me with, for it was a failure to think clearly.

J. Bottum

OxyContin Caution

In "A Bad Prescription from the DEA" (June 4), Eric Chevlen characterizes the Drug Enforcement Administration's stance against the widespread abuse of OxyContin as "misguided and wrongheaded." He further questions "DEA's authority to act" and the strategies being implemented to address this problem.

Oversight for approval, marketing, and handling of controlled substances is the responsibility of two federal agencies, the Food and Drug Administration and DEA. FDA is responsible for approving drugs for medical use and setting drug marketing regulations. These responsibilities cover all drugs, including controlled substances. DEA is mandated by the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) to prevent the diversion of pharmaceutical controlled substances, while ensuring that supplies are adequate to meet legitimate medical needs in the United States.

While DEA does not directly regulate the marketing of controlled substances, we become concerned when tactics appear to create an increased possibility for diversion. If aggressive marketing seems to lead to oversupply or maximize the abuse potential of a controlled substance, DEA endeavors to work with pharmaceutical companies and FDA to find appropriate solutions.

To enable DEA to pursue its mandate, the CSA established five schedules into which controlled substances are separated according to their approved medical use and abuse potential. Schedule I substances have no approved medical use. Substances in Schedule II, including OxyContin, are approved for medical use and have the highest potential for abuse. The CSA also established a closed system of distribution that includes the registration of controlled substance handlers, production quotas, recordkeeping, and security requirements. This closed system allows DEA to track and safeguard potentially dangerous controlled substances as they are transferred from the manufacturer to the user.

The CSA requires that controlled substances be prescribed, dispensed, or administered only for legitimate medical purposes by practitioners acting in the usual course of their professional practice. Neither the CSA nor its implementing regulations define "legitimate medical purpose." Additionally, they do not set standards as to what constitutes "the usual course of professional practice." DEA relies upon the medical community to make these determinations. In fact, DEA has strongly supported the Federation of State Medical Boards' "Model Guidelines for the Use of Controlled Substances in Pain Management." DEA recognizes that these guidelines reflect currently accepted standards that may be used by both medical professionals and regulators in determining the appropriateness of opioid prescribing.

In his article, Dr. Chevlen downplays the dangers of OxyContin abuse. He cites

data from the Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) indicating that acetaminophen (Tylenol), a product available on the shelves of every convenience store and pharmacy in the United States, is more than three times as likely to result in an emergency room visit as OxyContin. However, it is not merely the numbers that have raised concerns of the health care community and law enforcement agencies, but the speed with which the abuse trend continues to spread. The spread has continued despite restrictions placed on OxyContin as a Schedule II controlled substance by the CSA.

Since its 1996 introduction, the number of OxyContin prescriptions dispensed increased twenty-fold to about 6 million in 2000. Prior to this, the number of oxycodone-related incidents was relatively stable. Following OxyContin's debut, DAWN data for 20 metropolitan areas indicate that emergency room episodes and medical examiner reports involving oxycodone have increased 400 percent and 100 percent, respectively. Unfortunately, this information does not reflect the full extent of problems attributed to OxyContin, since most deaths have occurred in areas outside the DAWN system, such as Maine, West Virginia, and rural Kentucky, where officials describe the trend as an epidemic.

Another indicator of the magnitude of OxyContin abuse is the increased number of individuals seeking assistance for addiction problems. Drug treatment programs in the hardest hit states report that 50 to 90 percent of newly admitted patients identified OxyContin as their primary drug of abuse.

Considerable attention has been given to reports that DEA is planning to restrict the prescribing of OxyContin to pain specialists, and to limit its distribution to a few pharmacies. Throughout DEA's examination of the abuse of OxyContin, numerous options have been explored and discussed with interested parties. None of these options will be employed unilaterally without considering the effects they may have on public health. DEA has engaged in numerous dialogues with Purdue Pharmaceutical, OxyContin's manufacturer, and the medical community to address diversion and abuse problems that arise when medical practitioners lack sufficient training in pain management. As Dr. Chevlen admits in his article, "I learned virtually nothing in medical school about pain, and most of what I was taught as an intern and resident was wrong."

DEA agrees with pain management specialists' assertions that many general practitioners have not received the training necessary to address complex chronic pain syndromes. These specialists emphasize that Schedule II opioids are best used as treatments of last resort, and that when used, they should be part of a multi-disciplinary approach, to include physical and psychological therapy. It is feared that in the well-intentioned push to ensure adequate pain treatment by some less experienced practitioners, the terms "pain treatment" and "opioid

treatment" have become synonymous.

DEA recognizes that the best means of preventing the diversion of OxyContin is to increase awareness of the proper use and potential dangers of the product. Training programs must assist practitioners in distinguishing between patients truly in need and individuals engaged in drug-seeking behavior.

Despite implications by Dr. Chevlen to the contrary, DEA is taking a measured, reasonable approach to dealing with OxyContin abuse that is consistent with methods normally used in combating the diversion of pharmaceutical controlled substances. It includes liaison with the health care community and the pharmaceutical industry, education of medical professionals regarding scams used to obtain these products for illicit purposes, and the investigation of suspected diverters.

The American people should be assured that DEA is committed to their safety. As part of this commitment, DEA will ensure that adequate supplies of pain medications are available for those with legitimate needs and that the public is protected from the consequences of prescription drug abuse.

LAURA M. NAGEL
Deputy Assistant Administrator
Office of Diversion Control
Drug Enforcement Administration
Washington, DC

ERIC CHEVLEN RESPONDS: The fundamental question on which the DEA and pain management specialists disagree is this: Does abuse and diversion represent a tiny portion of the OxyContin and other opioids now being prescribed, or does it represent a substantial part or even a majority of it?

Unfortunately for the millions of Americans who have finally achieved a modicum of pain relief, and the millions more who are still inadequately treated, the DEA's actions and threats reflect the latter belief. For example, Donnie Marshall, the administrator of the DEA, recently told a congressional panel that "it's very, very obvious to me that a good part of the increase [in OxyContin production] is stuff that's going . . . into the black market." The only evidence offered for this conclusion is not the absolute number of cases of addiction-related events, but rather their rate of increase since the year of the drug's introduction. A moment's reflection will reveal the obvious: All useful medications newly introduced to the market experience a rapid increase in sales. When one starts with a small number of initial sales, then the percent increase will always be great. The same will be true of adverse events associated with the drug.

One bureaucrat's mistaken notions might seem of little consequence. But the untrammeled power of the DEA to interfere with pain relief makes the idea quite dangerous. The DEA has the authority to set quotas for how much oxycodone may be imported, manufactured, and processed into OxyContin. It is a command economy, and Marshall is the commander. While Laura Nagel assures us that no drastic action will be "employed unilaterally by the DEA without considering the effects they may have on public health," we must keep in mind that this is a police agency whose primary mission is drug control, not a health agency whose mission is pain control. While she says that the DEA will "ensure that adequate supplies of pain medications [are available] for those with legitimate needs," it is clear that the agency has no idea what those legitimate needs are.

We are not differing over small quantities here. In his subcommittee testimony, Marshall stated, "I am seriously considering rolling back the quotas that DEA sets and rolling back those quotas to the 1996 level until we do find ways to control this. That's a drastic step and it would be a very controversial step, because there is the need for this drug out there. But I am very seriously considering that." Drastic step indeed. Such a reduction is fully 95 percent of the current demand for OxyContin. Can Marshall really believe that 19 out of 20 prescriptions for OxyContin are illegitimate? On reflection, "misguided and wrongheaded" seems too mild a term to apply to a single uninformed bureaucratic action that would result in untold misery for literally millions of people.

Here we see the arrogance of power. A man whose only medical experience was a stint as a firefighter/EMT over 30 years ago is telling thousands of doctors who see the patients standing before them that he knows better than they how many people are "really" in pain, that he knows better than they which medicines should be used to treat the pain, and which should not. Even more arrogant: He is telling millions in pain that 95 percent of them will just have to put up with it.

"The American people should be assured," says Nagel. I don't think so.

KILL THE GANGSTER LOVE

PLEASE TELL ME that the "Parody" page has now expanded to include the "Casual" page, as there is no other way to understand Jonathan V. Last's celebration of the Philadelphia 76ers ("We're All Philadelphians Now," July 2/July 9). But then again, every chance Last gets, he blasts everyone who lives in southern California, particularly in Los Angeles. His classic loser, anti-Yankee-like diatribe could be overlooked, except for the Allen Iverson tribute.

He can't be serious about proclaiming this gangster as "pro-life [and] pro-marriage." Surrounded by illegitimate, multi-mothered children, this tattooed, multi-millionaire, obscenity-spewing, wannabe rap artist appears on national television to whine about his fate in life. A "profound respect for law and order"? Get serious. This is akin to the NBC announcers screaming, "Three more 3 pointers, another bucket, and Philly will only be down by 12!"

Publishing poor-loser comments from eastern fans is one thing, but how do you justify tearing down a clean-cut, model citizen like Kobe Bryant to hold up a scowling, poor sportsman like Iverson as a hero? Can we have a little more consistency with the rest of the magazine's content?

WARREN STITT
Dana Point, CA

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the weekly Standard

No Defense

Here's some unsolicited advice for two old friends, Donald Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz: Resign. Right now that may be the best service they could perform for their country, for it may be the only way to focus the attention of the American people—and the Bush administration—on the impending evisceration of the American military. If our suggestion sounds extreme, consider the following.

According to well-informed sources in the Bush administration, a few weeks ago Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld went to the White House to present his Fiscal Year 2002 budget request. After some five months of review, Rumsfeld had concluded that he needed approximately $35 billion in additional funds for FY 2002, with more to come in FY 2003. Rumsfeld was not highballing. His $35 billion was the minimum necessary to keep the armed forces in one piece in the near term and take a few baby steps toward transforming the military for the medium and long term. This was actually well below what serious studies have shown is needed, but at least it would have been a start.

Rumsfeld was mauled. The Office of Management and Budget demanded that Defense receive only a $15 billion increase over the Clinton baseline. They "compromised" at $18 billion. President Bush duly approved the halving of his defense secretary's request and moved on to more pressing business. As for the FY 2003 budget, according to our sources, OMB has let it be known that it will oppose any increase over $10 billion.

This was the third time in six months that Rumsfeld had had his head handed to him by the White House. The first time was back in early February when White House spokesman Ari Fleischer suddenly announced that there would be no significant defense supplemental for the rest of FY 2001, and that we would live for the next nine months—the first nine months of the Bush administration—under Bill Clinton's defense budget. No one had informed Rumsfeld of the decision; no one had even asked his opinion. If anyone had, Rumsfeld would have said the military needed at least $8 billion more for spare parts, equipment, and training—enough to keep planes flying and tanks rolling for the rest of the year.

Over the next four months Rumsfeld struggled to get some new money in an FY 2001 supplemental. According to administration sources he even got a promise from Bush that the Pentagon would get at least $10 billion. But then OMB stiffed Rumsfeld again. The Pentagon got only $5.6 billion, which Democratic congressman Ike Skelton pointed out would leave the military short of operating funds before the end of the fiscal year.

Those of us who expressed concern about the Bush administration's shorting of the military were told not to worry. Bush had to pass his tax cut first. Then the damage would be repaired in the FY 2002 and FY 2003 budgets. But that's not the way things have turned out. Now it's clear that there is no real prospect for a meaningful defense increase—this year, next year, or for the remainder of Bush's first term. And instead of repairing the damage, with each passing defense budget decision, the Bush administration has dug a deeper hole for the military.

Some may find it puzzling that Bush's proposed $18 billion increase isn't enough to meet our security needs now and in the future. Here's why it isn't even close. Half the money will go to pay for already approved pay increases, housing, and health benefits, and won't go to weapons, training, and the like. That leaves at most $9 billion to be spent on maintaining real defense capability.

The key word here is "maintaining." We're not talking about building up, about improving our capabilities, about investing money to transform the military for the future. The fact is that the military lacks the funds to carry out its *current* missions around the world. This was a major theme of Bush's campaign. As then-candidate Cheney pointed out in his memorable "Help is on the Way" speech, the serious "budget shortfalls" of the Clinton years were damaging troop morale, forcing the military to cut back on training and exercises, and creating dangerous "shortages of spare parts and equipment." A $9 billion increase over the Clinton budget is not nearly enough to address these shortfalls, let alone pay for anything else. In fact, last week the vice chiefs of staff of the services testified that the budget shortfall amounted to $9.5 billion for the Army, $12.4 billion for the Navy, $9.1 billion for the Air Force, and $1.4 billion for the Marines—for a total of $32.4 billion. And we repeat: This would only cover the cost of maintaining the mili-

tary's current readiness to perform its mission, not new weapons or military transformation.

Only President Claude Rains could claim to be shocked to discover upon taking office that the minimum defense increase truly necessary turns out to be at least $50 billion—not $35 billion, much less $18 billion. For two years now, defense experts both inside and outside the Pentagon have been nearly unanimous in estimating that an annual increase of $50 billion or more was required to meet our current security requirements and prepare for the future. Last year, former secretaries of defense Harold Brown and James Schlesinger called for an increase of more than $50 billion annually. The Congressional Budget Office also identified the shortfall as $50 billion, as did outgoing Pentagon officials from the Clinton administration. A study by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, entitled "The Coming Defense Train-Wreck," found that the military needed $100 billion more just to keep doing what it is doing and to replace aging and worn out equipment. Now, in a manner that can only be described as Clintonian, the Bush administration is doing the dance of the seven veils to convince us that it has got the problem in hand.

These continuing defense budget shortfalls will have real implications. If President Bush and the Congress refuse to fund the military sufficiently to perform its current missions around the world, guess what? The military will gradually cease performing those missions. Some may think this just means no more peacekeeping in the Balkans. But the consequence of an underfunded military will be the steady erosion of our ability to defend *all* of America's vital interests, not only in Europe but in Asia and in the Persian Gulf as well.

Rumsfeld and his team have already given us a glimpse of the future—a future of American retreat and retrenchment. It now seems certain that the Bush administration will officially abandon the so-called "two-war" standard that has served since the end of the Cold War as the rule of thumb for what is needed for American global preeminence. The administration will claim that the two-war strategy has become outmoded in an era of proliferating threats from smaller nations and terrorist groups armed with unconventional weapons. But don't be fooled by fancy, defense whiz-kid explanations. The real reason they're abandoning the two-war strategy is that, under the current budget constraints, they can't afford it.

Perhaps there is a better way to calculate America's military requirements than the two-war standard. But that standard at least reflects fundamental and inescapable realities. The United States is a global superpower with allies and vital interests in far-flung strategic theaters: in East Asia, where China threatens Taiwan and other American allies, and where North Korea threatens South Korea; in the Persian Gulf, where an increasingly powerful Saddam Hussein and Iran threaten Israel and moderate Arab nations, as well as our access to oil; and in Europe, where an expanding NATO remains the best guarantor of democracy and stability.

So call it a two-war standard or call it a banana: To preserve our superpower status, to remain the guarantor of international peace and stability, and to defend our own vital interests, the United States must be able to fight and defeat different aggressors in different parts of the world—and at the same time. For a "one-war" strategy is really a "no-war" strategy. An American president will be reluctant to commit forces in one part of the world if he knows that by doing so he leaves the United States and its allies defenseless against aggression in another. Is it so far-fetched to imagine that a Saddam Hussein, seeing the United States throw its entire force into some conflict in East Asia, might choose that moment to launch a new aggression in the Middle East? As the Clinton Pentagon's 1997 Quadrennial Defense Review stated: "If the United States were to forgo its ability to defeat aggression in more than one theater at a time, our standing as a global power, as the security partner of choice, and [as] the leader of the international community would be called into question. Indeed, some allies would undoubtedly read a one-war capability as a signal that the United States, if heavily engaged elsewhere, would no longer be able to defend their interests."

Unfortunately, that is precisely where the Bush administration is now headed. According to administration sources, Rumsfeld adviser Stephen Cambone has been telling the Army that over the coming years the Bush administration plans to cut two or more active-duty divisions. Never mind that such cuts would practically require an end to all U.S. military missions in Europe. Think about what it means for the administration's Iraq policy. During last year's campaign, Cheney correctly warned that, thanks to Clinton's cuts, if the United States had to fight Iraq again the military would have a much riskier time than it did in Desert Storm. In 1991 Colin Powell threw nearly 8 Army divisions—out of a total American force of 18 divisions—against Saddam's army. A decade later, the Army has been cut to a total of 10 divisions. Soon it will have 8 or fewer divisions to meet potential threats everywhere—in East Asia, Europe, and in the Persian Gulf. In practice, assembling a heavy armored force of even 4 divisions to defeat Saddam's army and then occupy Iraq would require every heavy unit based in Korea, Europe, and the United States. Would an American president be willing to respond to aggression from Saddam if it meant leaving the American military so thinly stretched everywhere else around the globe?

The Bush administration has added money for missile defense, and that's a good thing. But if America's

Patrick Arrasmith

ability to project force abroad continues to decline, the gradual construction of a missile shield will be of little help in deterring our adversaries. Missile defense or no, if the Bush administration proceeds down the path of underfunding the military, the future of American foreign policy will be one of curtailed commitments, gradual withdrawal, and appeasement. Perhaps it's an isolationist's dream. For everyone else, it's a nightmare.

It ought to be George W. Bush's nightmare. For if the president does not reverse course now, he may go down in history as the man who let American military power atrophy and America's post-Cold War preeminence slip away—the president who fiddled with tax cuts while the military burned.

Surely George W. Bush did not seek office to preside over the retrenchment of American power and influence. Surely Donald Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz did not come back to the Pentagon to preside over the decline of the American military.

In testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee last week, Wolfowitz seemed to take a swipe at the way the White House has handled the defense budget issue so far. He did so by means of a historical analogy. "In 1950," Wolfowitz noted, "General Omar Bradley urged President Truman to spend at least $18 billion on defense. The Joint Chiefs gave an even higher estimate at $23 billion, and the services' estimate was higher still at $30 billion. But the president said we couldn't afford that much—$15 billion was as much as we could afford. Six months later, we were suddenly in a war in Korea. Just as suddenly we found we had no choice other than to budget some $48 billion—a 300 percent increase. How much better it would have been to have made the investment earlier. If we had done so, Dean Acheson might not have been forced to define Korea as being outside the defense perimeter of the United States—on the grounds that we did not have the forces to defend it."

Wolfowitz went on to say that it was "reckless to press our luck or gamble with our children's future" by spending only 3 percent of GDP on defense. He argued that the United States should be spending 3.5 percent as "an insurance policy"—"to deter the adversaries of tomorrow and underpin our prosperity, and by extension, peace and stability around the globe." We couldn't agree more, of course. The problem is, the president Wolfowitz serves has approved a defense budget that amounts to 3 percent of GDP this year, and may well fall under 3 percent next year.

All honor to Wolfowitz for telling the truth about his own administration's "reckless" defense budget. Does Rumsfeld agree with his deputy? Does Vice President Cheney? And what about the commander in chief, George W. Bush?

—Robert Kagan and William Kristol

Where Were the Adults?

They sure weren't being judgmental.

BY NOEMIE EMERY

MONICA LEWINSKY is alive and well, and Chandra Levy, one must now fear, is most likely neither, but these two young women seem to have a lot in common. What most stands out is that neither seems to have benefited from any controlling moral authority, or to have been well served by the adults in her life. They were not cold or cruel; they were just non-judgmental.

Almost no one in whom Lewinsky confided—her mother, her aunt, her therapist—warned her that she was being a fool. No one, including Lewinsky's father, seems to have been greatly put out by the news that the 24-year-old intern had been servicing the very married 50-plus president in his off moments, or as he discussed troop movements with congressmen.

Similarly, Chandra Levy's aunt was told last Thanksgiving by her 24-year-old niece that she was all but living with a married congressman 30 years older, that he insisted on complete and fanatical secrecy, that he went out with her in semi-disguise, and that she planned on *five years* of living like this before "getting married, having a baby," and settling down. The aunt's response was not the normal one, which would have been something like "Are you out of your senses?" Instead, as the *Washington Post* has reported, she advised the girl to "get a terrarium" for his apartment (he liked cacti), "make dinner . . . be helpful. Organize his closet . . . color-coordinate everything."

Lewinsky and Levy both come from well-to-do California Jewish families and have physician fathers. Both confided in an aunt, and the aunts were first to learn of the affairs. Chandra Levy's confidante was Linda Zamsky. Monica's was Debra Finerman (the sister of Marcia Lewis, Monica's mother), who sometimes was a bridge between the two. As the Starr Report noted, "Finerman advised that Marcia Lewis knew about Lewinsky's relationship . . . Finerman told Lewis about the physical relationship. Lewis may not have known the details before Finerman told her, but she knew Lewinsky was emotionally involved." Finerman was told in detail of only one sexual incident between Lewinsky and Clinton, to which she "responded by saying something to the effect of 'yuck.'" That aesthetic recoil is as close as we get to a judgment in either of the intern sagas.

These, of course, are all well-meaning people, and the Levys are suffering terribly. But they seem to be victims of the prevailing cultural winds, according to which trying to discipline, judge, or even guide one's young charges is wrong. The grown-ups want to be cool; they want to be hip; they want to be with it; they want to be friends with their children; they want to avoid being prudes. As Kay Hymowitz writes in *Ready or Not*, her 1999 book on how not to raise children, "That generation . . . hoped that by escaping Puritan hangups . . . their kids would have 'healthy' sexual attitudes. They hoped that their daughters would no longer experience the fear and shame that had once shadowed the girl who had 'done it,' and that they would be confident enough to admit it. . . . This generation hoped that they would demystify sex, free it from the control of the church ladies. . . . In this world, sex would be better, and so would kids." There's nothing worse than being called "square" by your children or neighbors. They might think you're not being their friend.

Lewinsky père, who should have wrung Clinton's neck, was as compliant as any father at the court of Charles II or Louis XIV. Lewinsky mère, who showed concern mainly in retrospect, was angry only at Clinton aide Evelyn Lieberman, who for good reason threw Monica out of the White House. When Lewinsky told her aunt she was trying to return to a job at the White House, Finerman did not seize the chance to get her to reconsider. "I didn't discourage her," she said. "I didn't say anything." Spoken like a pal.

But the problem is that young people have enough pals. They need parents—or some well-meaning older person—to impart the lessons of experience and then set some limits, and rules. As Hymowitz reminds us, "Children are ignorant. They look to those who have been here a while to tell them what they should do and how to make sense of the world. . . . Children do not naturally know how to shape their lives according to their own vision. . . . The sense of adult purpose that was inspired by these truths is largely lost."

Lost indeed, these dewy things were allowed to drift into their amours with their lying and long-toothed Lotharios, without a chorus being raised by their elders to tell them that what they were doing was not only wrong—perish such stuffiness—but also short-sighted and stupid and dangerous. Wrong because a culture makes rules for good reasons, that should not be crossed without other reasons that are overpowering. Wrong because they might some day be 53-year-old women, seeing their husbands go off to the office. Stupid

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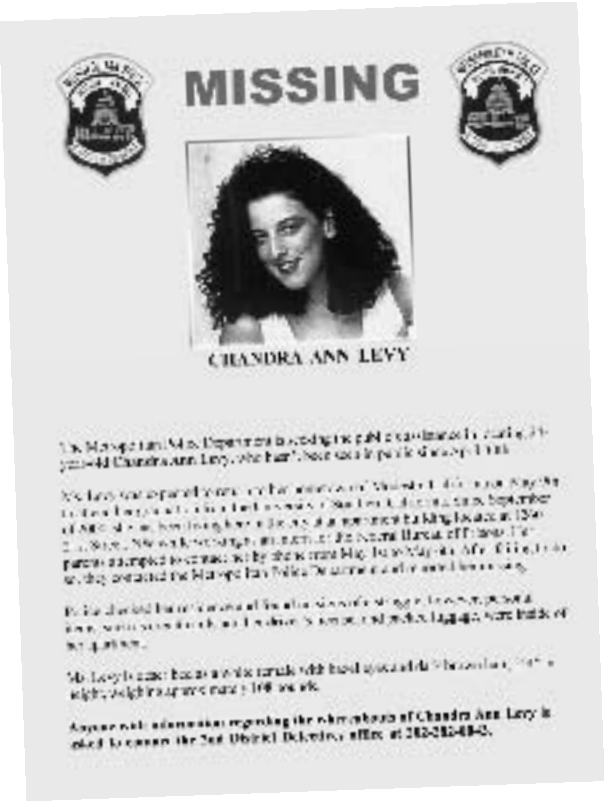
because this compulsive Don Juan is likely to have sequential affairs, and even concurrent ones. Stupid because the hard-faced blonde wife will stay with and defend him, to protect their arrangement, to which she is accustomed. Stupid and dangerous, because when you pose a threat to someone with a great deal to lose, you become expendable. Your privacy, your reputation, or you yourself may disappear.

Exactly how dangerous this has been to Chandra Ann Levy is something we may soon discover. It is at this point that her story diverges from the Monica channel—an intern used by an aging roué, who then lies repeatedly—and heads down a track far more sinister. She starts to sound a lot less like Monica—now peddling handbags in lower Manhattan—and a great deal more like Anne Marie Fahey, the object of a sex-politics-and-missing-person story that was a media sensation in the latter part of 1996. For awhile, you could not drive down the I-95 corridor between New York and Washington, especially in the Delaware area, without passing through a forest of posters showing pictures of Fahey, like Levy a pale-faced young woman with the same curly mass of black hair.

Levy vanished from her apartment in Dupont Circle taking her keys but leaving her purse and her credit cards; leaving clothes in the bedroom, and dishes and food in the sink. Fahey vanished from her apartment in Wilmington, taking her keys, but leaving her purse and her credit cards, leaving clothes and groceries about. Levy's case is being pushed by her parents, who have sought out the media, distributed posters, and pressed relentlessly on the man they think holds the clues to solve her mysterious disappearance. Fahey's parents were dead, but her five siblings relentlessly did the same things. Connections to politics drove these stories: Levy, as the world now knows, had an affair with a congressman. Fahey was the scheduling secretary to Tom Carper when he was governor of Delaware. (He was at one point suspected, as her diary referred to an older, married "Thomas C.") Fahey had an affair, not with Carper, but with Thomas Capano, a very rich, well-connected, Wilmington lawyer and businessman, who had multiple mistresses and fairly strange tastes.


MISSING

CHANDRA ANN LEVY

Like Levy, Fahey at first blush was starstruck, but later came to see her older swain as a "controlling, manipulative, insecure jealous maniac." She decided to dump him. After a tense dinner date, though, he talked her into coming back briefly to his house, where, during an emotional quarrel, he shot her once in the head. He dumped her body from his brother's boat 60 miles out in the Atlantic: The body was never recovered, but the ice chest that carried it was. According to journalist George Anastasia, in *The Summer Wind*, his book about the crime, police from the start thought that Fahey was dead and Capano had killed her, but it took two years to find the evidence to make the case. In 1999 Capano was convicted of first-degree murder. He is now on death row.

As Anastasia writes, "Before it was over, Capano, the well-regarded lawyer and local celebrity, would be unmasked as a philanderer who had cheated on his wife almost from the day they were married, as a libertine who enjoyed watching his mistress have sex with other men, as a control freak . . . and as a self-centered individual who wouldn't take no for an answer. . . . Somewhere along the way, like many other politicians, sports figures and celebrities, he came to believe that the right thing was whatever he chose to do." Two years from now, we may still be discussing Chandra Ann Levy. And does this sound like people we know?

In view of this, and the less dire fate of Monica, the time to be judgmental has surely arrived. It is time to tell children—and young adults—that the rules of the culture are there for a reason; and that some things are wrong and foolish and dangerous. It is time to remember that the real role of guardians is to warn and train children, and not to watch as they do as they please.

It is too soon to know what befell Chandra Levy, what happened to her and why. It is not too soon, however, to realize that the kind of affair that she entered into has led to a situation in which both murder and suicide seem plausible outcomes. It is not certain that anyone could have talked her out of it. But it seems now that no one really tried. ♦

Condit Unbecoming

A study in Washington, D.C., creepiness.

BY SAM DEALEY

GEORGETOWN DOYENNE Sally Quinn *is* Washington. Which is why when Mrs. Benjamin Bradlee deigned to advise a beleaguered congressman a week ago Sunday in the *Washington Post*, everyone listened.

"Gary, Gary, Gary," she admonished Rep. Condit. "Most people don't care whether you or any other congressman has an affair. We would have no Congress if we cared a lot. And besides, we have been through so much with Clinton that the last thing anyone is going to get exercised about is the extramarital sex life of a politician."

How Gary Condit came to be the object of such attentions some must still be wondering. On the face of it, there's little in the background of the six-term congressman from the Central Valley of California to mark him out as a candidate for the police blotters and scandal sheets.

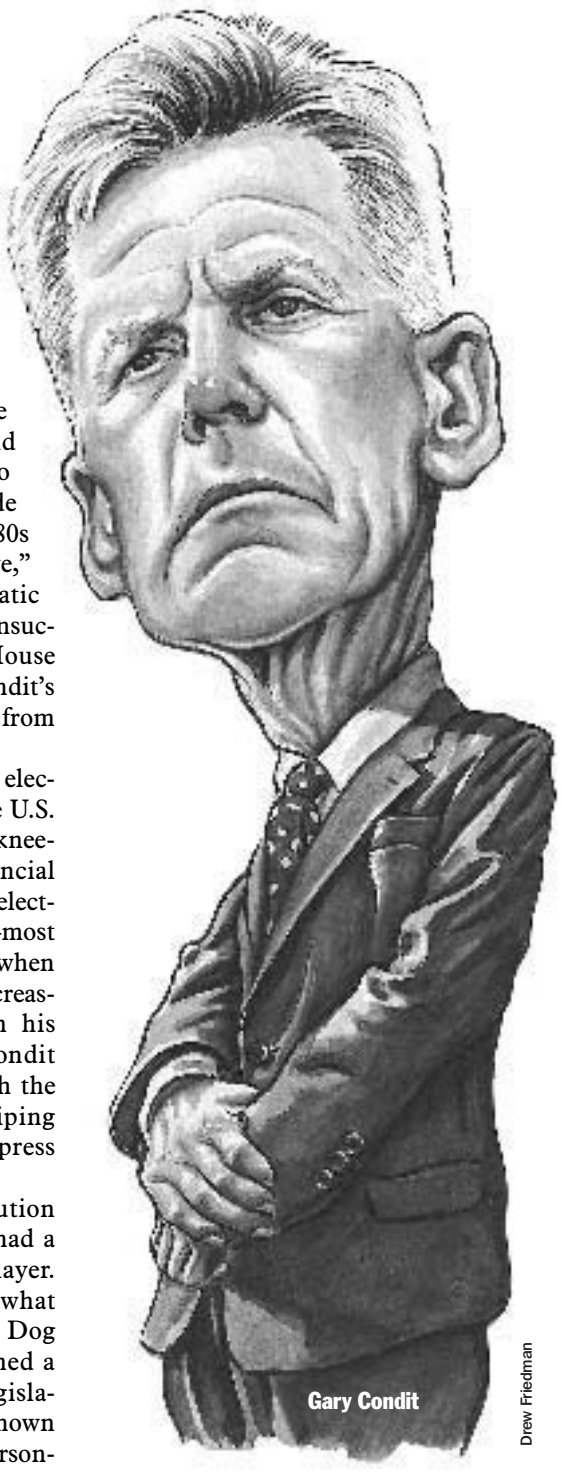
Born in 1948 to a Baptist preacher of modest means, Condit grew up in Tulsa, Oklahoma. By the age of 18, when his father moved the family to the rural town of Ceres, California, Condit already had a son by his high-school sweetheart and wife. A daughter would follow eight years later; both now work for California governor Gray Davis.

He attended the California State University junior college in Stanislaus County, and worked variously as a roughneck in an oil field and a tool-and-die machinist. He seems to have entered politics for reasons less of ideology than public service. At 24, he won a seat on the city council of Ceres. At 26, he was elected mayor. Two years later, he joined the county board of supervisors. And in 1982, at 34, he moved up to the state assembly. He made national headlines in the late '80s as a member of the "Gang of Five," a cabal of moderate Democratic state legislators who staged an unsuccessful coup against liberal House speaker Willie Brown. Then Condit's political career got a jump-start from another scandal.

In 1989, Condit won a special election to replace Tony Coelho, the U.S. House majority whip who was knee-deep in allegations of financial impropriety. Condit has been reelected by wide margins ever since—most recently, by 67 percent in 2000, when George W. Bush carried the increasingly conservative district. In his early years in Congress, Condit refused to stay in lock step with the Democratic majority, and sniping occasionally appeared in the press questioning his party affiliation.

With the Republican Revolution of 1994, the moderate Condit had a chance to be a major player. Although he helped found what became the conservative Blue Dog Democratic caucus and remained a go-to person for bipartisan legislation, he never became a well-known power broker and made little personal impression. Both the American Conservative Union and the liberal Americans for Democratic Action give him moderate marks—half good, half bad. Other than modest homes in D.C. and his district, his financial disclosure forms show no assets or investments. His nickname is Mr. Blow Dry.

But below the public radar, it seems that Condit was enjoying an Indian bachelorhood. He drove a Harley. The neighborhood where he chose to buy a condo was trendy, arty Adams Morgan. "I just ended up there, and it's a terrific place to be," Condit told the *San Francisco Chronicle* in 1996. "Everything is 93 percent predictable" back in Ceres, he said. But "Adams Morgan is very different. I enjoy it a lot."



Gary Condit

Drew Friedman

Sam Dealey is a writer in Washington, D.C.

Condit began to enjoy a lot of things a lot. At 50, he went with then-representative John Kasich to Rolling Stones and Pearl Jam concerts—at the latter of which he threw himself into the mosh pit. According to a long-time aide, Condit attended a 50,000-strong Hell's Angels birthday bash for a convicted cop-killer. It now emerges that he was enjoying other things, as well, that belie his Nazarene façade: Thai and Chinese food, Ben & Jerry's low-fat chocolate chip cookie dough ice cream, body-oil massages, and ladies of all stripes—an intern, a barely legal preacher's daughter, and a flight attendant among them. His favorite D.C. bar is a joint named Tryst; his favorite tie-rack is his headboard. Needless to say, the private Gary Condit has caught most people by surprise.

And yet, given these revelations, official Washington—Democrats and Republicans alike—reflexively lent Condit a hand. Take Dick Gephardt. "I have enormous respect for Gary Condit," the House minority leader said June 15, by which time it was obvious Condit was misleading the police and the public by denying his adulterous affair with Chandra Levy. "I think he's a wonderful public servant and a wonderful human being."

Even after credible reports of more philandering and suborning perjury, colleagues like Republican Chris Shays went out of their way to praise Condit on the Sunday morning talk shows. "He's a great man, and I love the guy," Shays told one, calling Condit "a close friend and someone I have a lot of respect for." Said Jack Kingston, Republican from Georgia, "He's an honorable man." The list goes on. Explaining her colleagues' impulse to circle the wagons, Anna Eshoo, Condit's fellow California Democrat, told a reporter, "None of us here, Republican or Democrat, kick people when they're down." Tell that to Newt. To date, only Georgia representative Bob Barr has demanded that Condit resign for disgracing his office.

Even those not elected to public office are tongue-tied. A host of conservative organizations have yet to weigh in on Condit. "If we were to focus on the inappropriate relationships that are probably true or may be true for members of Congress, it would be a full-time job," says Paul Hetrick of Focus on the Family. Of course, there is a world of difference between playing the chambermaid looking for dirty sheets and condemning already obvious impropriety.

So why the hesitation? As Sally Quinn made official in the *Post*, inside the Beltway it's wrong to be judgmental. The gravest sin is not to dally with girls half your age but to frown on those who do. "It's almost as if Clinton ultimately won that debate, that it's somehow inappropriate to comment on these gross moral failings," says Gary Bauer of American Values. "The biggest secular sin in the country today is to proclaim the behavior of someone else as either right or wrong. That is getting more ingrained among average Americans, but it long since won among elites."

It's only when directly asked that the Rev. Lou Sheldon of the Traditional Values Coalition will comment. "If the accusations hold to be true concerning the kinky sex and the adulterous affairs—" he starts, then tries again. "I can understand he might have had one, but not multi. And I can't even justify having just one. But it's easier to forgive one slip, like David and Bathsheba. But he's got a whole harem of Bathshebas." Sheldon, who thought he knew Condit for 20 years, now calls for the congressman's resignation.

The enlightened position Quinn propounds—that sex doesn't matter—is only an evolved version of Clinton's defense—that sex is private. The implication is that the media and others should feel ashamed for calling attention to these affairs. The problem, though, is that without their attention, the case of the missing intern languished. The D.C. police trod lightly because of the nature of the case, and had the young woman's family not fueled coverage, the case might have gone nowhere.

Just what Gary Condit's role was in the disappearance of Chandra Levy, if any, we do not now know, but one thing is certain: In post-Monica Washington, if you want to keep the critics and investigators at bay, have a tawdry affair. ♦

Dear Abbe

Can the Democrats' top ambulance chaser help Gary Condit? **BY STEPHEN F. HAYES**

ABBE LOWELL walked with confidence to the horde of journalists gathered outside his downtown Washington, D.C., offices last week. He was relaxed, comfortable, a man in charge.

Lowell, who had volunteered to become the lead attorney for Gary Condit, adjusted his suit jacket, glared at the reporters, and opened his statement by scolding the media. It is a theme he pounds home in nearly every statement he makes, and one that he returned to several times in the 15-minute press conference, held ostensibly to emphasize Condit's willingness to cooperate with D.C. police.

Thin, slightly balding, and well-manicured, Lowell led the session with reporters—broadcast live across the country—as one might conduct an orchestra, waving off questions, inviting others, turning methodically to the various cameras. For most Americans—who rank public speaking as their top fear—this would be terrifying. For Abbe Lowell, it is routine.

Lowell has made a career (and a fortune) helping the politicians who give public service a bad name. Besides his work for his friend Condit—who represents California's Central Valley in Congress—Lowell's clients read like a Who's Who of Democratic bad boys: There's another longtime friend, senator Robert Torricelli of New Jersey, who is under federal investigation for illegally accepting money and gifts; representative Patrick Kennedy; convicted Clinton donor James Riady; ex-HUD secretary Henry Cisneros; ex-House speaker Jim Wright. Lowell also served as counsel for House Democrats on the Judiciary Committee throughout President Clinton's impeachment. When a Democrat gets in high-profile legal trouble, it's a good bet Lowell will soon be at his side.

The Condit case, though, is the first to feature a missing person—it has been two and a half months since anyone saw 24-year-old Chandra Levy—and thus marks something of a departure for Lowell. Nonetheless, his approach has been straight out of Public Relations 101.

Abbe Lowell

AP/Wide World Photos

First, Lowell has tried to chip away at the public's growing suspicion that Condit has something to hide. Condit's shifting stories—first denying, then acknowledging an affair with Levy—have made this difficult, to say the least. So Lowell trumpeted a third meeting he said he had facilitated between D.C. police and Condit, and he held the press conference announcing Condit's willingness to have his apartment searched, and to consider DNA and polygraph tests.

Next, Lowell has tried to invent a second bad guy, the media. That way, whatever time pundits and media-types spend navel-gazing about their coverage of the case, they're not spending in discussions of Condit's evasiveness. Journalists being held in even lower esteem than politicians, the public is inclined to sympathize with those on the receiving end of media scrutiny.

That's the idea, anyway. The problem with Lowell's efforts is that they come some nine weeks after Levy disappeared. In that time it has become increasingly apparent that Condit has not been forthcoming with anyone—his family, his staff, Washington, D.C., police, the Levy family. His lies have begotten lies, his distortions more distortions. And perhaps the only thing that has become obvious in the hazy weeks since Levy's disappearance is this: Gary Condit has little concern for Chandra Levy and much concern for Gary Condit. Any attempt now to cast Condit as a truth-teller interested only in finding Chandra Levy is absurd.

The same is true of efforts to demonize the media. Too late. When Chandra Levy was first reported missing, even scandal-hungry Washington journalists showed restraint. Despite the intensifying Washington buzz about Condit's shadowy existence since the disappearance, much of the media proceeded slowly, even reluctantly. The frenzy—and it is now a frenzy—began in earnest only after Chandra's mother and her aunt confirmed reports about the intimate nature of the relationship. More important, Levy's parents *want* the media involved.

The constant reporting on the case,

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after all, led directly to Condit's disclosure—in his *third* police interview—that, yes, he did have a sexual relationship with Levy. Lowell himself admitted that such information is not only relevant, but crucial to police. Lowell to *Face the Nation* host Bob Schieffer on Sunday, July 8: "It's not important that you know the nature of the relationship. It's important that the police do." But seconds earlier, in the same response, Lowell offered one of what has become a series of lies: "What [Condit] has done and said throughout is that he'll cooperate with police and he's going to help find Chandra Levy, if he can possibly do that."

Lowell's colleagues and even some adversaries praise his keen legal mind and sharp reasoning, and he is certainly an improvement over Joe Cotchett, the Condit attorney who sent an affidavit to stewardess/paramour Anne Marie Smith, encouraging her to lie about her sexual relationship with the congressman. "Abbe is really an outstanding lawyer," says Alan Gershel, the former deputy assistant attorney general who led the Justice Department's Campaign Finance Task Force that investigated Torricelli. "I dealt with no one other than Abbe on the Torricelli matter, and I really had a very positive experience with him. I found him to be a very smart, aggressive defense attorney."

For a smart guy, though, he says some dumb things. Mostly, he says lots and lots of words that mean very little. Lowell, asked by ABC's Claire Shipman whether the denials of an affair by Condit's office were inaccurate: "Well, I don't want to say that, because that's not exactly what I think. What I think is that the press has glommed onto what's the nature of the relationship very early on, and I think the congressman and the staff and others are saying, 'Hey, let's talk about what might actually help find her, as opposed to getting to something that may be of interest to you,' and I think, therefore, people wanted to start playing games of wordsmanship, and I don't think that's appropriate. So, rather than sitting here and saying what was she—and if I say she was a friend, what does that mean? And if I say she was something else, what does that mean?—I don't think that helps anybody. I think it certainly doesn't help anybody find her right now."

His statements often conflict with one another, and even more often conflict with the truth.

To wit: "Congressman Condit has told the police from the beginning everything, has never misled anybody," Lowell said on an appearance on CNN's *Late Edition with Wolf Blitzer*. He later added, "From the beginning, while he has not been forthcoming to [the media], not wanting to be on camera and answer the questions about his private life, he has been totally forthcoming with police."

Lowell's public comments have contradicted those of the police on everything from who arranged the third interview to whether police had previously requested a search of Condit's apartment, both key points in trying to demonstrate that Condit has been forthcoming.

As to whether he really intends to help police answer questions about Chandra Levy, that may not be in the interest of his client. ♦

No Salvation for the White House

Congressional progress but a PR setback for Bush's faith-based initiative. **BY TERRY EASTLAND**

On July 11, the House Ways and Means Committee approved one part of President Bush's faith-based initiative when it passed a measure permitting those who don't itemize their taxes to deduct charitable contributions. In a statement, the president praised the committee for its vote and predicted the legislation would stimulate more charitable giving, thus enabling faith-based organizations to "help those in need." Bush said he would "continue to work on a bipartisan basis with Members of the House and the Senate" to make his initiative a reality.

Surely, on this particular policy effort, things must be going well for the Bush administration? Actually, no. For even as Ways and Means was acting (in support of a much smaller deduction than the administration wants), the White House was still reeling from the public-affairs disaster that had befallen a different aspect of the president's initiative—one involving "charitable choice."

Charitable choice is a policy that recognizes the potential utility of faith-based social services in addressing the nation's most pressing social problems. Under charitable choice, the government may not discriminate on the basis of religion against otherwise qualified providers applying for social-service funds, nor may it intrude upon the religious autonomy of faith-based organizations that receive such funds, which must serve all comers regardless of their beliefs. On several occasions since 1996, Congress has inserted charitable choice into social-service programs. Bush is seeking legislation that would extend the principle to such programs generally.

AP/Wide World Photos

Charitable choice enjoys broad support; both Al Gore and George W. Bush endorsed it during the presidential campaign. But it has always had critics, including many on the left who say that charitable choice encourages discrimination. This accusation had not made it much beyond the websites of left-wing activists until July 10, when the *Washington Post*, citing "an internal Salvation Army document," reported that the administration "is working with the nation's largest charity, the Salvation Army, to make it easier for government-funded religious groups to practice hiring discrimination against gay people."

According to the document, the White House had made a "firm commitment" to the Army that it would write a regulation protecting charities receiving federal funds from local efforts to prevent discrimination against gays in hiring and to mandate domestic-partner benefits. "In turn," said the *Post*, the Army had agreed to promote the administration's faith-based initiative by spending as much as $110,000 monthly to lobby in its behalf.

The *Post* treated the Army's internal document as an authoritative representation of the story, failing to note that the document may have been merely the enthusiastic product of, as a spokesman for the Army told me it was, "an overly hopeful" author. Nor did the *Post* try to illumine the motives of the source whence the document was "obtained"—whose identity is precisely what you'd most like to know when reading this kind of story. In a conspicuous wink to the leaker(s), the *Post* noted the document's statements that "the Salvation Army's role will be a surprise to many in the media" and thus efforts should be made to "minimize the possibility of any 'leak' to the media."

The *Post* did include the comment of a White House spokeswoman disputing the document's claim that the administration had made a "firm commitment." But the paper left the clear impression that there had been a transaction between the Salvation

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Army and the White House, a quid pro quo that required a devious course of action on the part of the president. "The document," declared the *Post*, assuming full interpretive mode, "suggests President Bush is willing to achieve through regulation ends too controversial to survive the legislative process."

Substantively, the story was incomplete on issues of law, failing to explore the technical merits, or lack thereof, of the Salvation Army's proposed regulation. No matter. The story drew thundering reaction from Democrats on Capitol Hill. Senate Democrats warned that issuance of the regulation described in the *Post* story "might terminally wound" (senator Joseph Lieberman's words) the president's charitable-choice legislation. House Democrats called for an investigation, no less. Bad faith on the part of a White House willing to engage in "secret deals," as Senate majority leader Tom Daschle put it, was widely presumed.

White House officials denied any "deals" with the Army and said they were merely considering the kind of regulation the group had proposed. Shortly before the network anchors could read the day's news, however, officials announced that there was no need for the regulation. It would have denied assistance to local and state authorities that required religious charities to (in the document's words) "adopt terms or practices for those with religious responsibilities" or provide employment benefits, if doing so was "inconsistent with the beliefs and practices" of the organization. White House officials said, however, that current law, together with that which the administration is now seeking, would be enough to ensure that faith-based providers could hire whom they wished.

You can argue that the administration had no other choice than to act as it did and cut its losses quickly. Yet the episode revealed a White House unable or perhaps even unwilling to argue an important case.

Leaving aside whether the regulation the Army sought was advisable or not (and arguably, for technical reasons of law, it was not), administration officials failed to explain why faith-based providers should not be asked to act in ways that violate their own religious beliefs—as would happen, for example, if the Salvation Army were asked to pay health or disability benefits for a "domestic partner." (In fact, the Army was asked to do just that—by San Francisco. The Army said it wouldn't, citing its doctrines, and eventually decided to quit providing services in the city.) Faith-based providers are unlikely to do their good works unless they maintain their religious identity. Necessarily, the nation is unlikely to benefit as much as it might if those providers, upon the insistence of government, become something they are not and thus lose their unique capacities. Ultimately, the issue here is, or at least ought to be, not "discrimination" but helping the poor and needy with the most effective programs. And it would be foolish to assume that secular providers do a better job than faith-based ones.

As Congress takes up charitable choice legislation in coming weeks, administration officials doubtless will be asked to offer their views on these matters. Obviously, the administration will have to be better prepared to argue crucial legal and philosophical points than it was the day the *Post* story broke. If it is, that story, tendentious though it was, will have served a useful purpose. ♦

Is It Time for Arafat to Go?

More and more Israelis think so.

BY TOM ROSE

Jerusalem

THE FIRST CRISIS to threaten Israel's four-month-old national unity government was caused by a handshake: Israeli foreign minister Shimon Peres and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat were photographed shaking hands at the Socialist International Conference in Lisbon on July 1. How could Israel expect President Bush and other Western leaders to refuse to meet Arafat, critics asked, when its own foreign minister was greeting him warmly?

Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon, leader of the right-wing Likud party, was widely criticized for permitting the encounter, but the harshest censure was saved for Peres himself. Opinion polls showed more than 70 percent of Israelis opposed the Peres-Arafat meeting, which dominated public debate for days. Condemned by nearly every newspaper and attacked even by leading members of his own Labor party, the beleaguered Peres threatened to resign and bring the government down.

And yet mere months ago, the Lisbon meeting would have been considered routine for any Israeli leader, left or right. For the past ten years, while there was bitter disagreement about exactly what to say to him, mainstream Israelis agreed that their government had no choice but to negotiate with Arafat. Today, a sea change has taken place. For the first time since the Madrid Conference of 1991, Israelis are seriously looking at options other than Arafat, and clamor for military action is heard on all sides.

Tom Rose is publisher of the Jerusalem Post.

After a contentious cabinet meeting on July 9, ministers present described Sharon facing down demands for war against the Palestinian Authority. "You're all big heroes with all your advice," snapped the prime minister and famously hardline former general. "At the end of the day, the responsibility is mine. This region is not going to war."

But they also reported a pointed exchange between Sharon and Peres, an architect of the 1993 Oslo Accord for which he won the Nobel prize, along with the late prime minister Yitzhak Rabin and Arafat. "Anyone who thought we could place our security in Arafat's hands was mistaken," said Sharon, to which Peres replied, "Without Arafat, the situation will only be more difficult."

Peres speaks for some on the left who say that, detestable and untrustworthy though Arafat may be, it isn't up to Israelis to decide who should lead the Palestinians. Increasingly, Israeli policymakers counter that it is very much Israelis' place, in fact their responsibility, to decide with whom they will negotiate. Just as three U.S. administrations have refused to negotiate with Saddam Hussein, Israel must refuse to deal with Arafat. Besides, if the last Israeli government already made Arafat the most generous offer conceivable and was violently rejected, why resume a process that leads back to the same endgame?

While most Israelis seem to have concluded that the Arafat era is over, their uncertainty and fear about what comes next are his best hope for political survival. Those who reject the new "post-Arafatism" charge that casting off Arafat, either by forcing him into exile or, should Israeli security deteriorate further, destroying his regime, would bring chaos in the Palestinian Authority and the rise of radical Islamic leaders in his place. Advocates of a new Israeli approach say it has become necessary to isolate and ultimately remove Arafat from power precisely because he has aided, abetted, and armed the terrorists who threaten to engulf the region once again in war.

Among those who favor looking beyond Arafat are most of the senior officers of the Israeli Defense Forces, the very people who encouraged Rabin to engage Arafat in the first place. Defense minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, one of two candidates for leader of the Labor party, is the most prominent advocate of disengaging from Arafat, although he too has yet to specify how. Some military planners are less reticent. What purport to be updated top secret national security plans for an all-out assault—one document is entitled "The destruction of the Palestinian Authority and disarmament of all armed forces"—have been excerpted in Israeli newspapers and cited in the British publication *Foreign Report*.

Since it is now the position of Israel's leading political and military figures that the Palestinian Authority is not a functioning interlocutor but rather a well-financed terrorist organization, some suggest that it would be better to disable and disarm it and deal separately with the various militias and atomized terrorist cells likely to replace Arafat. IDF commanders seem increasingly of the mind that decentralized Palestinian terror will be easier to combat than centralized Palestinian terror, but also that eliminating the Palestinian Authority's oppressive presence in the life of nearly every Palestinian might allow more moderate figures to emerge.

For all its intensity, the new talk of disengaging from Arafat is still just talk. Foreign Minister Peres has not backed away from his Lisbon meeting. On July 11, he told the *Jerusalem Post* that Israelis could "once again trust" Arafat. The government of Israel remains committed to "restraint" in the face of Palestinian terror. And it has affirmed its intention to implement the recommendations of the Mitchell Commission, which calls upon Israel to return to the negotiating table and reach a final status peace agreement—with none other than Arafat.

Yet if public pressure continues to grow, this policy may become untenable. "If everyone in Israel comes to a conclusion that the elimination of Arafat is the only way to stop violence," said communications minister Reuven Rivlin the other day, "then we will be forced to do so." ♦

Illustration by Drew Friedman

As the World Votes

The Reagan-Thatcher era may be passing, but the era of big government does seem to be over.

By Michael Barone

Half a century ago it was plain which way democracies were heading: left. In the United States, the Democrats held the White House for the nineteenth straight year. In Britain, the Labour party had just created the National Health Service and nationalized the commanding heights of the economy. Europe's Christian Democratic parties were creating welfare states hardly less ambitious than those advocated by their social democratic rivals. Parties of the right won only when they were led by national icons who promised not to dismantle the welfare state—Winston Churchill, Dwight Eisenhower, Charles de Gaulle.

Ten years ago it was plain which way democracies were heading: right. The domestic revolutions inaugurated by Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan seemed to be sweeping all before them. Republicans held the White House for the eleventh straight year and had a president with a 91 percent job approval rating. Thatcher had led the Conservatives to three straight general election victories, and her successor, John Major, would lead them the next year to a fourth. Parties of the right held office in most of Western Europe, and in Eastern Europe and Russia the voters were starting to oust the Communists and former Communists and to install in their places those who had advocated or assisted the overthrow of communism in 1989-91. In Latin America voters elected leaders who promised hard currency, privatization of government firms, freer trade.

Putin

All photos: AP / Wide World Photos

Today it does not seem plain which way democracies are heading. Writers like E.J. Dionne proclaim the triumph of "Third Way" parties of the left—Bill Clinton's Democrats, Tony Blair's Labour, Gerhard Schröder's and Lionel Jospin's Socialists—and declare the Third Way the wave of the future. Former Communists have been swept back into office in several countries in Eastern Europe, and Russia's president is a veteran of the KGB. Yet the Third Way has not everywhere been successful. Al Gore was not elected president in 2000, despite representing the incumbent party in a time of peace and prosperity. Spain and Italy have switched from left to right. In Latin America, free market policies are under attack in Brazil and Argentina and under siege in Colombia and Venezuela.

What are we to make of these conflicting trends? In the last 15 months I have covered elections in five major democracies, interviewing candidates and key strategists and voters on the street, analyzing preelection polls and election returns. Four of these countries are the four arguably most important to Americans: the United States, Mexico, Russia, and Britain. The fifth, Italy, I have included because—well, because I like to visit Italy. Now the burst of electoral activity is over (the next scheduled general elections in these countries won't occur until 2004-06), so it's a fine time to look back and take stock. First, some notes on individual countries.

*Russia, March 2000. This was less in the nature of a democratic election and more in the nature of a coronation. In August 1999, President Boris Yeltsin had installed former KGB officer Vladimir Putin as prime minister. Then, claiming that the September bombing of apartment buildings in Moscow was the work of Chechens, Putin had relaunched the war against Chechnya, to enormous popular

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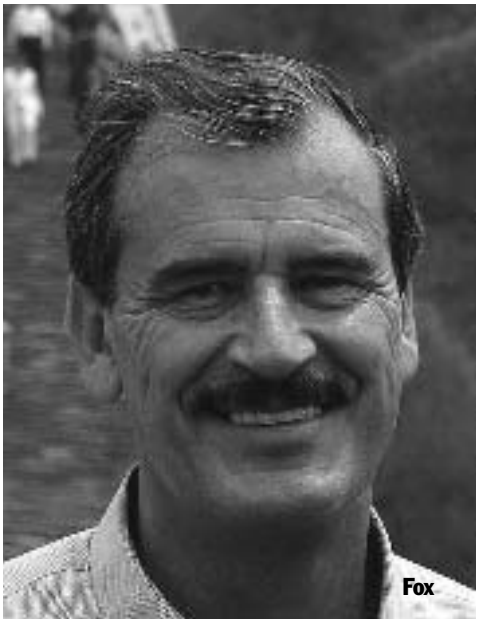
applause. And at the end of December, Yeltsin had resigned, making Putin president, and a presidential election had been scheduled for March 26. The only serious competition came from the bedraggled Communist Gennady Zyuganov.

Behind the façade of this turnover of power were widely circulated rumors that the apartment bombings were the work of the FSB (the renamed KGB); the modus operandi was not typical of Chechen operations, the explosive used was difficult to obtain, and the bombs were planted in a way that maximized casualties. The possibility that Putin was part of a cynically planned murder for political gain is chilling. So is Putin's crackdown, begun before the election and continued with vigor ever since, to silence critical publications and the independent NTV network.


Fox

Putin won with 53 percent of the vote, just over the 50 percent required to avoid a runoff. Voters interviewed on the street seemed to know little about the man; Putin voters said he was young and energetic, meaning he was not infirm and drunk, like Yeltsin. It was as if they were saying, "We hope the next czar turns out to be a good czar," in a fatalistic tone that suggested they feared he would.

But there were some good things about Putin's victory. He beat the Communists. They are a ragtag bunch, but it has never been certain that Russians would not vote them back in. In much of the runup to the 1996 election, Zyuganov had led Yeltsin, though he lost the election, and in 2000 he lost more ground. Putin promised to promote the rule of law and hired free marketeer German Gref as his economic adviser. In office, he has moved successfully to allow the sale of land and to impose some certainty on legal rules. If he has persecuted NTV owner Victor Gusinsky, he has also driven out another oligarch, Boris Berezovsky. His victory represented a move toward free markets.

★MEXICO, JULY 2000. "*¡Hoy! ¡Hoy! ¡Hoy!*" shouted the crowd awaiting Vicente Fox at the Angel of Independence statue on Mexico City's Paseo de la Reforma on Election Night 2000. It was a reference to a mistake Fox had made during the campaign, but also a declaration that "Today! Today! Today!" the ruling PRI party had been defeated for the first time in 71 years. As the crowd jumped up and down in unison, I could feel the ground shake—a reminder that Mexico City is built on an earthquake-prone swamp and that its political firmament was changing beyond recognition.

Fox's victory was anything but assured. He had trailed or at best run even in public polls; it turned out that pro-PRI news media had been suppressing pro-Fox numbers. The PRI had run a candidate, Francisco Labadista, who could plausibly claim to be a reformer himself, and the incumbent president, Ernesto Zedillo, had led an administration that had helped produce economic recovery and in important ways had reformed law enforcement and freed up the political system. Fox's PAN party had long been associated with the Catholic Church and with pro-U.S. feeling, while PRI with its anticlerical and anti-*yanqui* traditions claimed to embody Mexican nationalism. (The PRI's trademark colors were always those of the Mexican flag; ordered to change them, the party traded the white for a very light gray.)

Fox's victory should not be portrayed as an undiluted victory for free market capitalism. He declined to oppose the constitution's requirement that oil production and marketing be monopolized by the state-owned company Pemex. He brought into his campaign and later into his government social democrats like Jorge Castaneda, now foreign minister. He called for cleaning up law enforcement and selling off other state companies. And only one candidate, the leftist PRD's Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, repudiated the North American Free Trade Agreement; he finished third.

Fox's victory was contingent on many factors: his personal stature, allowing him to rise above the baggage of his party; an electoral system that is now more transparent and honest than that of, say, St. Louis; Cardenas's weak performance as mayor of Mexico City, which pushed him down from first to third in polls. But it is also evidence of a basic change in the thinking of the Mexican people, and in particular of the younger generation. Up through 1982, at least 66 percent of Mexicans voted PRI for president. But in 2000, of the 60 percent of Mexicans who were under 40, only 31 percent gave their votes to PRI. The ruling party no longer embodied the nation.

★THE UNITED STATES, NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2000. George W. Bush won despite running against the incum-

bent vice president in a time of peace and prosperity. He won despite proposing individual investment accounts in Social Security. He won despite taking stands on abortion and gun control that the mainstream media proclaimed vote-losers. He won despite the bad luck of losing by a few thousand votes Iowa, Wisconsin, and Oregon, which have 25 electoral votes between them—enough to make the Florida controversy moot, had those few thousand votes gone the other way. And, it should be added, Republicans held the House of Representatives, winning more votes for the House than the Democrats for the fourth election in a row.

As I have written elsewhere (*National Journal*, June 9, 2001, and in the forthcoming *Almanac of American Politics 2002*), the critical demographic divide in this election was religion. Americans tend to vote as they pray, or don't pray. Voters who attended religious services weekly or more often voted 59 percent to 39 percent for Bush. Voters who attended religious services less often or not at all voted 56 percent to 39 percent for Al Gore. During the 1990s the Clinton-Gore Democrats, through the success of their economic policies and their stands on issues like gun control and abortion, did make some gains for their party, almost entirely in major metropolitan areas among cynical, relativistic, secular voters. But Republicans also made countervailing, though smaller gains, in rural areas and in fast-growing counties at the edge of metropolitan areas, among tradition-minded, moralistic, and religious voters. As a result, Gore easily carried states like New Jersey and California, which the elder George Bush had won in 1988, but Bush easily carried states like West Virginia, Tennessee, Arkansas, Kentucky, Georgia, and Colorado, which Bill Clinton had carried in 1992. And note that Bush's states are growing faster: The 30 states that gave Bush his 271 electoral votes in 2000 will cast 278 electoral votes in 2004.


Berlusconi

*ITALY, MAY 2001. This was the biggest victory for the political Right in these five elections. Silvio Berlusconi, whose coalition had lost to the left-wing Ulivo coalition in 1996, won a convincing victory. And this despite the arguably successful record of the Ulivo governments, which had cut Italy's budget deficits enough for the country to qualify to join the euro—an electoral plus in a country where voters strongly support the European Union and feel no affection for the weak lira. The strongest force behind Berlusconi's victory was a desire to reduce the size and power of government: Italians speak of *lo stato ladro*—literally, the state-thief. As one of Italy's richest men and the owner of three of its six television networks, Berlusconi seemed to have the ability and the brio to get the job done.

Counterattacking was the Italian and European press—*Le Monde* of France, *El Mundo* of Spain, *The Economist* of Britain—which seized on the prosecutions brought against Berlusconi to argue that he was unfit for power. But Gianni Agnelli, a kind of uncrowned king, came to Berlusconi's defense, charging that foreigners were treating Italy like a "banana republic." So Berlusconi became a focus of national pride, and it didn't hurt that he was pro-American—supportive of missile defense, dismissive of the Kyoto treaty—at a time when George W. Bush was the object of scorn in most European media. Center-right voters interviewed on the street showed genuine enthusiasm for Berlusconi, and little interest in the charges against him (it is thought that any entrepreneur dealing with Italy's hyperregulatory state must break the rules). Center-left voters showed little enthusiasm for the government or interest in the Ulivo candidate, the Green former mayor of Rome, Francesco Rutelli. Young voters were especially likely to support Berlusconi.

Berlusconi's government will probably last a full five-year term: He emerged with solid majorities in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. In 1994 his government was brought down by the defection of the Northern League's Umberto Bossi, and in 1996 his coalition failed to win because the Northern League ran separate candidates for the three-quarters of the seats that are elected by district. But in 2001 the Northern League was allied with Berlusconi, and it won too few seats for any future defection to bring Berlusconi down.

*BRITAIN, JUNE 2001. There was never any suspense about who would win in Britain. In September 2000 Tony Blair's Labour party fell behind the Conservatives in polls during the "petrol" crisis, when motorists couldn't buy gas. But the moment passed, and Labour quickly rebounded. Except for that one episode, it has led the Tories by wide

margins in polls ever since September 1992, when Britain went off the European Rate Mechanism and in effect devalued the pound. Yet views of Labour have changed. Voters interviewed before the May 1997 election showed great enthusiasm for Blair and his "new" Labour party. Voters interviewed this year grumbled about public services, especially the National Health Service, but had little interest in the Conservatives and treated a Labour victory as inevitable.

Blair tried to gin up enthusiasm and boost turnout in heavy Labour areas, but turnout dropped from 71 percent to 58 percent of eligibles. Very few of the 659 seats in the House of Commons changed hands; there was a swing to the Conservatives in most Labour seats, and to Labour or the Liberal Democrats in many Conservative seats, plus plenty of tactical voting, in which large numbers of Labour supporters voted Liberal Democrat or vice versa to keep the Tories out.


Blair

Blair touted Labour's competence at managing the macroeconomy and hailed chancellor of the exchequer Gordon Brown's decision to free the Bank of England from government control; the prime minister also promised that Labour would improve the Health Service and secondary education (the government has significantly improved elementary schools) and argued that the Conservatives' tepid tax cuts would savage services. But he constantly emphasized that New Labour was not rejecting the reforms of the 1980s—Margaret Thatcher's reforms. Conservative leader William Hague argued that a Blair victory would result in Britain's joining the euro and going off the pound, something which 70 percent of British voters in polls oppose. But Blair promised, as he had in 1997, that Britain would join the euro only if the voters agreed in a referendum. Blair was also at great pains to show that his Third Way government could get along as well with George W. Bush's Republican administration as it did with Bill Clinton's Third Way administration. He made it plain that Britain would support the United States on missile defense and would not vocally oppose it on Kyoto.

What do these five elections tell us? First of all, we are still living in the world of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. In all five countries the winners accepted the idea that the state should not grow indefinitely and that the market provides solutions for many problems. Russians rejected the Communists for Putin; Mexicans rejected PRI for Vicente Fox; Americans elected Bush; Italians rejected Ulivo for Berlusconi; the British voted for a New Labour party that promises convincingly not to undo the 1980s. The Third Way has some appeal; where it had been adhered to rigorously, by Blair in Britain, it seemed unbeatable. But not in Italy—and not in the United States, where the Clinton-Gore Democratic party, though the incumbent during peace and prosperity, won 49 percent of the vote in 1996 and 48 percent in 2000.

True, arguments for less government do not always prevail either, and some proposals for more government prove popular. But even Tony Blair was at pains to say that he would supplement the National Health Service with private medical services, much to the fury of public employees' unions. Proposals for less government are not hooted off the stage and are not politically fatal. Fifty years ago politicians of almost all parties agreed that there must be more government and argued only about the extent of it. Today politicians of almost all parties express faith in the operation of free markets and argue only about just how far that should go. Fifty years ago more government seemed the wave of the future. Today we may get a little bit more government here, but we also get quite a bit less of it there. We are no longer in Franklin Roosevelt and Clement Attlee's world.

Something else these elections tell us is that voters in many very different countries have no visceral mistrust of the United States. Rather, they tend to see America as a friend and an example. European elites may sneer at George W. Bush and decry his support of capital punishment and opposition to the Kyoto treaty. But many or most European voters support capital punishment, and no European government except Romania's has ratified Kyoto. Vladimir Putin and Vicente Fox, Tony Blair and Silvio Berlusconi, in their different ways, want to make their countries more like America. So do the voters who elected them—especially the young, who voted heavily for Fox and Berlusconi. The future, it seems, does not belong to the Left. ♦

"Futile Care" and Its Friends

Hospitals—and legislators—want to decide when your life is no longer worth living.

By Wesley J. Smith

When John Campbell's teenage son Christopher became comatose after a car accident in 1994, the last problem Campbell expected was obtaining proper medical treatment for his son. Campbell, a corporate executive, had excellent health insurance and was convinced Christopher would receive the best of care. But then something awful happened. One month after the accident, Christopher developed a burning fever. When his temperature reached 105—and rising—Campbell asked the attending nurses why his son was not being treated for the condition that now threatened his life. He soon found out: Christopher's doctor was out of town and the on-call physician had refused to order care. The nurses told Campbell they were helpless to act on their own.

Campbell demanded to speak with the doctor. It took hours before the nurses were able to reach him on the phone. By then Christopher's fever had worsened to 107 degrees. "He was literally burning up," Campbell recalls. "I knew that if something was not done, he would die."

Campbell demanded treatment to reduce his son's fever. At first, the doctor refused. "He actually laughed," Campbell recalls. But the distraught father wouldn't give up: "I raised holy hell. I used every ounce of persuasion I had in me." Finally, reluctantly, the doctor ordered the nurses to provide fever-reducing medicine, and the fever subsided.

Christopher was completely unresponsive for more than four months after the fever incident. Then, against medical expectations, he awakened. Today, after years of arduous rehabilitation, he lives with his parents, a disabled young man who counsels troubled teenagers and who, with his father's help, created a foundation that feeds 30 hungry African children breakfast 365 days a year. But had Campbell not successfully pressured the doctor into saving Christopher's life, none of that would have happened. Christopher Campbell would be a cherished memory instead of a living son.

The physician's refusal to provide Christopher desired life-sustaining treatment was an early application of a relatively new bioethical theory that has since swept the Western medical world. "Futile care theory" holds that when a physician believes the quality of a patient's life is too low to justify life-sustaining treatment, the doctor is entitled to refuse care as "inappropriate"—even if the treatment is *wanted*. It is the equivalent of a hospital putting a sign over its entrance stating, "We reserve the right to refuse service."

Of course, doctors should not be required to provide physiologically futile treatment. For example, if an ulcer patient demands chemotherapy, doctors should refuse, since the desired "treatment" would not improve the ulcer at all. But "physiological futility" of this sort is not the essence of contemporary futile care theory. Rather, in medical futility bioethicists and doctors unilaterally determine when the quality of a human life, or the cost of sustaining it, makes it not worth living.

Proponents of futile care theory often cite tube feeding for patients in a persistent vegetative state as an example of "futile" or "inappropriate" treatment. Let's analyze this. What is the medical purpose of "artificial nutrition"? It keeps the body functioning. Why do many futilitarians (as they are sometimes called) wish to authorize doctors to refuse such treatment? Not because it doesn't work—as in the example of the demand for chemotherapy to treat an ulcer—but because it *does*. Thus in futile care theory the treatment itself isn't denigrated as futile—the patient is.

One way patients or families currently thwart futile care impositions is by threatening to sue. To counter this threat, futilitarians are moving on two fronts to all but guarantee that courts will ultimately acquiesce to futile care theory. First, in hospitals nationwide they are quietly promulgat-

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ing formal, written futile care protocols that establish procedures under which wanted treatment can be refused. Second, they are beginning to place language in federal and state legislation that would stamp the government's imprimatur upon the core principles of futile care theory.

For obvious reasons, hospitals don't hold press conferences to announce the institution of futile care protocols. Thus no one actually knows how many institutions across the nation have decided to impose futile care theory on unsuspecting patients, but there is little doubt that many have. In 1996, the *Journal of the American Medical Association* reported that several Houston hospitals had cooperatively created a medical futility policy designed to establish "professional integrity and institutional integrity" as a counterbalance to "patient autonomy." Ethics committees were granted the power to decide whether life-sustaining treatment should be provided as requested or withdrawn over patient/family objection. Once the ethics committee rules, the matter is settled, and all further "inappropriate" care may be terminated unilaterally. The Mercy Health System, a group of Philadelphia-area Catholic hospitals, instituted a similar futility program last year, described in "Time for a Formalized Medical Futility Policy," published in the July/August 2000 *Health Progress*. And in an article on medical futility in the Fall 2000 *Cambridge Quarterly of Health Care Ethics*, the authors reported that 24 out of 26 California hospitals they surveyed "defined nonobligatory treatment" in terms that were not "physiology based."

One of the stated purposes behind these hospital protocols is to thwart patients' ability to obtain a judicial order requiring the continuation of life-sustaining care. As the *Cambridge Quarterly* authors put it, "Hospitals are likely to find the legal system willing (and even eager) to defer to well-defined and procedurally scrupulous processes for internal resolution of futility disputes." In other words, the strategy is to convince judges that, as mere lawyers, they are ill-equipped to gainsay what doctors and bioethicists have already decided is best.

As if that weren't enough cause for alarm, federal and state legislation is now being introduced that would explicitly empower doctors to deny life-sustaining treatment against the will of patients or their families. The most blatant example is found in Senator Arlen Specter's 171-page "Health Care Assurance Act," which seeks to expand health coverage for children and disabled people, among many other provisions. Buried deep in the bill is Title VI, which authorizes patients to consent or refuse medical treatment. That's fine. But the kicker comes in subsection B(ii), which is steeped in the lexicon of futile care theory:

> TREATMENT WHICH IS NOT MEDICALLY INDICATED.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to require that any individual be offered, or to state that any individual may demand, medical treatment which the health care provider does not have available, or which is, *under prevailing medical standards, either futile or otherwise not medically indicated*. [Emphasis added.]

As currently written, the bill would be a disaster for the most vulnerable and defenseless among us: patients who are dehumanized and viewed as parasitic drains on limited health care resources. Indeed, imagine the different fate that would have befallen Christopher Campbell had the doctor who refused to treat his fever been empowered by *federal law* to tell his father that sustaining the life of a persistently comatose patient was "not medically indicated under prevailing medical standards."

The New York state legislature also has two bills pending that would implement futile care theory. The "Health Care Decisions Act for Persons with Mental Retardation" would permit physicians and hospitals to refuse treatment requests by the guardians of mentally retarded patients, if the doctor would not have honored an identical request from a competent patient "because the decision is contrary to a formally adopted written policy of the hospital expressly based on religious beliefs or sincerely held moral convictions central to the hospital's operating principles." A formally adopted futile care protocol would clearly fall into this category.

A similar policy in AB 5523, legislation establishing the rights of surrogate health care decision-makers, would permit a hospital ethics committee to "approve or disapprove" a request to render wanted life-sustaining treatment. Adding to the potential for abuse, the workings of the ethics committee would not be "subject to disclosure or inspection," nor would any committee member be allowed to "testify as to the proceedings or records of an ethics review committee, nor shall such proceedings and records otherwise be admissible as evidence in any action or proceeding of any kind in any court . . . " In short, ethics committee adjudications could become the moral equivalent of Star Chamber proceedings, with members empowered literally to decide issues of life and death in an atmosphere of secrecy and unaccountability.

Under both pieces of New York legislation, caregivers who disagreed with futile care impositions would have the option of changing hospitals. But in these days of managed care, when the sickest patients generally cost hospitals money rather than bring profits, this option is more mirage than reality.

Should a hospital transfer prove unavailable, the legislation requires the hospital to "seek judicial relief or honor the [patient/family's] decision." But families would face a badly stacked deck when sued: State law and the written hospital protocol would already have formally legitimized futile care theory, making a hospital victory far more likely.

Moreover, hospitals have deep pockets from which to pay $500-per-hour lawyers, the substantial fees of doctors, and bioethicists who would testify that refusing wanted care is both ethical and standard medical practice. Patients or caregivers, on the other hand, would have to pay lawyers and experts out of their own pockets, potentially leading to financial ruin.

In California, futile care theory has already been legalized. A review of language recently put into the Probate Code finds that a "health care provider or health care institution may decline to comply with an individual health care instruction or health care decision that requires medically ineffective health care [physiological futility] or health care *contrary to generally accepted health care standards applicable to the health care provider or institution*." [Emphasis added.] In other words, if an institution defines certain types of wanted life-sustaining treatment as contrary to their internal standards, doctors can refuse to render the care. At that point, the doctor must cooperate with the transfer of the patient to another institution and continue to provide the care until transfer "or until it appears that a transfer cannot be accomplished." Presumably, if no other hospital agrees to take the patient, the non-treatment decision can be imposed unilaterally.

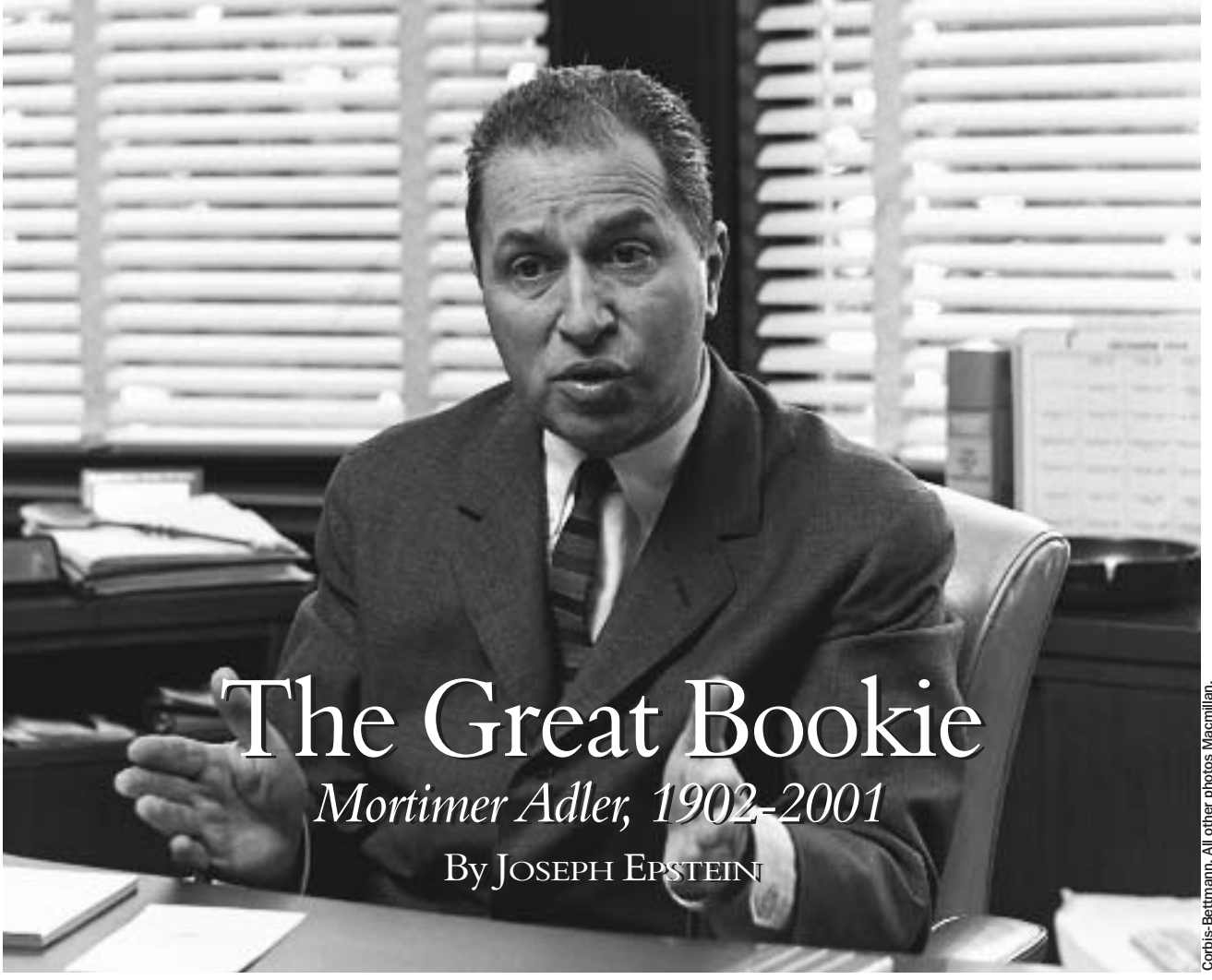
Why is this happening? The usual bioethical rationale for imposing medical futility on defenseless patients is "distributive justice"—i.e., a Montana hospital should deny Grandma Jones wanted life-sustaining antibiotics or respirator care so society can provide health benefits to uninsured Little Suzy in Appalachia. Thus it is hardly surprising that Senator Specter included an explicit futile care provision in legislation designed to expand access to health care.

Yet ironically, imposing futile care theory on patients will not save much money, since end-of-life care constitutes only about 10 percent of total health care expenditures. Futilitarians know this, of course—which is why some already advocate restricting access to "marginally beneficial care" once the futile care fight is won. And what is marginally beneficial care? A few years ago Dr. Donald J. Murphy, a leader of the futile care movement, gave me the example of an 80-year-old woman requesting a mammogram.

Thus medical futility is not an end but rather the beginning of a thousand-mile journey leading directly to society-wide health care rationing—a euphemistic term for medical discrimination, based on subjective quality-of-life criteria, against patients who are elderly, expensive to care for, disabled, or dying. Eventually, this will include all of us. We ignore the threat of futile care theory at our own peril. ♦

"YES, I REMEMBER MY FIRST PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS CASE..."

Michael Ramirez



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The Great Bookie

Mortimer Adler, 1902-2001

By Joseph Epstein

On June 28, Mortimer J. Adler, propagandist for the reading of great books, indexer *extraordinaire*, and the world's highest-salaried philosopher, died at the age of ninety-eight.

I worked for Mortimer, as we all called him, in the late 1960s. After a year-long stint as the director of an anti-poverty program in Little Rock, Arkansas, I had acquired, through the good offices of Harry Ashmore, a job as something called "senior editor" at Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., in Chicago. As with every other job I have ever had, I was not so much eager for this job as I was to escape the job I then held. (White flags were shooting up everywhere in what was unhappily called "The War on Poverty.") So I was hired, along with ten or twelve others, to design a vast, genuinely radical revision of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. The pay was high, the comedy turned out to be wild, and the job put me back in Chicago, city of my birth.

Apologies to Diderot, D'Alembert, & Co., but the making of encyclopedias has never seemed to me of much interest. I felt no more affinity for cross-referencing than I did for cross-dressing. Etymologically buried within the word "encyclopedia" is the notion that all knowledge is a great, linked circle. Not at all my idea of a good time: altogether too intertwined, vast, grandiose. But it was something to do until I felt the need to escape this job, too, which four years later I did.

I was hired not by Mortimer Adler, but by a man named Warren Preece, a former journalist who had been executive secretary at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, then a very slow-moving and luxuriously run think tank in Santa Barbara, California, which was said handsomely to illustrate nothing so much as the Leisure of the Theory Class. Things at Britannica, Inc., at the outset certainly couldn't have been more leisurely or theoretical. We were asked to write papers suggesting themes around which the new *Encyclopaedia Britannica* might best be organized. I wrote one on "struggle" as a possible theme—a paper that, if I have any luck at all, will long ago have been shredded, lost, or disintegrated. An entire week, sometimes two, would go by without having anything to do. Meanwhile, the *unterwerkers*, the subject editors and the picture editors, working in the hard gravel of fact on which any good reference work depends, kept things going on *Britannica*, doing the real work of running an encyclopedia.

After a year or so of this high-level dithering, Mortimer Adler was brought in to organize the new set. His energy and stamina were greater than those of anyone I have ever known. I have seen him lecture—browbeat is closer to it—a room of specialists on each of their own subjects for ten hours, do a two-hour call-in radio show interview afterwards, return

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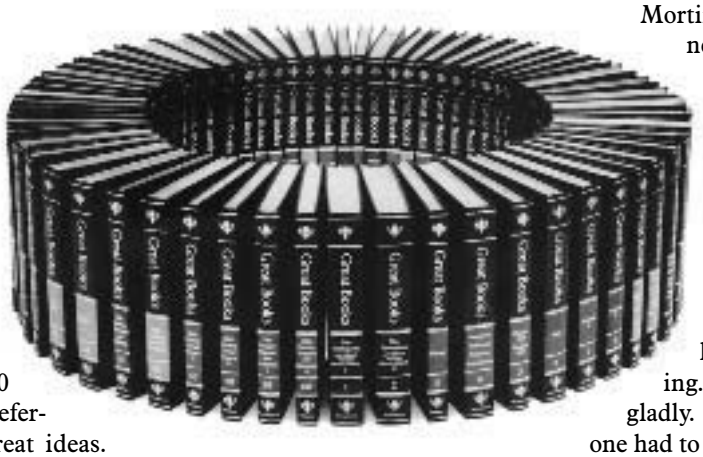
home to work on a book (he liked to turn out one a year), and, I should not have been in the least shocked to learn, end the day by making vigorous love to his thirty-odd-years-younger wife, and at last fall asleep doubtless while attempting to draw a bead on some tangled epistemological problem.

After a tumultuous career as a teacher at the University of Chicago, where he had offended everyone but the janitorial staff, Adler departed to form Great Books Clubs and to publish, under the auspices of Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., a set of fifty-four volumes called, collectively, *The Great Books of the Western World*, with two thick index volumes he christened the "Syntopicon," which must constitute the world's largest and most difficult to use index of ideas.



Through lucubrations too elaborate and boring to go into here, Adler decided that there are 102 great ideas—running alphabetically from Angel to World—and was able to hire a staff of unemployed intellectual workers to plow through the fifty-four volumes, constituting roughly 32,000 pages, to discover 163,000 referents in them to the 102 great ideas. The project took eight years and roughly a million dollars, back in the 1950s, when a million dollars really was a million dollars.

Nobody, apparently, was around within Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., with sufficient authority to tell Adler that, far from being a great idea, the Syntopicon didn't even qualify as a dopey notion. After the books' publication, the intellectual journalist Dwight Macdonald didn't mind doing so, and in a fine devastation he amusingly dubbed the entire project "The Book of the Millennium Club." After making the crucial point that the Syntopicon failed to distinguish between major and minor references, Macdonald called it "one of the most expensive toy railroads any philosopher was ever given to play with."

Mortimer was sixty-five when I first encountered him, and looked more like fifty. Stocky, perhaps five foot six, rosy rather than ruddy of complexion, jowly, broad chested, short legged, expensively dressed, he was built, as they used to say of a certain kind of automobile of the era, to hold the road. He had a slight lisp, notable when saying the word "perspicacious," which he said a lot. A racing mind caused him to stammer, especially in argument, where he preferred to kill off opponents quickly. A broadsword not a rapier man, he once debated Bertrand Russell on the subject of the right ends of education, and after Adler spoke, Russell began his rejoinder by saying: "I greatly admire Dr. Adler's rugged simplicity." People who heard the debate judged that Mortimer won but had sustained so many rhetorical lacerations that the victory wasn't worth it.

Sitting in a room around an immense conference table, we senior editors, now that Mortimer was in charge, were put to the task of designing what our chief called a "topical" table of contents, a device that, once up and running, would organize the subject matter of the new *Britannica* with a logic and efficiency of extraordinary . . . well, perspicacity. World knowledge was neatly divided up into ten parts, and each of the editors was to design outlines for these parts, or parts of the parts, that would form Adler's table of contents. From these extended outlines, the design of the article in *Britannica* would be dictated. The larger aim was to supply readers of the new encyclopedia with no mere source of information but the means to a liberal education.

Two members of Mortimer's old Columbia University connection, Charlie Van Doren and Clifton Fadiman, joined the group. Fadiman easily won the prize for the most pretentious outlines. (Seeing Fadiman and Adler together, I used to think: two Sanchos Panza and no Don Quixote in sight.) I seem to remember Fadiman's composing for his outline on popular culture a rubric about the origin of the movies that ran: "The beginning of cinema: the curious confluence of an emerging technology and a surgent ethnic group." After reading this, I passed along a note to the editor sitting next to me that read, "I think he means that the Jews got there first."

Mortimer claimed to be a proponent of arriving at positions through reasoned discussion—he was on record approving "intellectually well-mannered disputation"—but somehow things didn't quite work out that way. The combination of deadlines and his impatience quickly forced him into intellectual bullying. He did not suffer subtlety gladly. To hold his brief attention, one had to develop to a high power the art of quick blunt statement. He also erected a number of distinctions—"first-intentional and second-intentional knowledge" was a notorious one—that served as barbed wire to keep everyone at bay. "I know nothing more stupid and indeed vulgar than wanting to be right," wrote Paul Valéry, who wouldn't have done at all well in our meetings, and to whom Adler wouldn't have listened in any case.

I recall a scruffy sub-editor who was invited in on the day we discussed psychology, his specialty. Tieless, he put his feet up on the table and announced, "The main thing here is that you don't want to pigeonhole this material." But pigeonholing, feathers and guano all over the joint, was of course the whole intent and meaning

of our job. At the break, Mortimer said that he never wanted to see this man at another of our meetings, and he was banished from the project.

Never big on civility, Mortimer was an imperialist of the ego. The best, often the only, way to keep his interest was to talk to him about himself. Even then he would abandon you in mid-sentence if a more important person entered the room. He would tromp over people who disagreed with him, especially if they were employees, while lavishing sycophantic attention on the very rich or on people he needed at the moment.

Mortimer often enraged me, until I came to view him, I believe rightly, as an essentially comic character—not an idiot but a clown-savant. The comedy, as old as Aristophanes, was that of the inept philosopher: the man with his eyes on the heavens who, missing everything in front of him, falls into the mud. His physical ineptitude was considerable. All mechanical objects deranged him. He was famous as a non-swimmer, failing to get his bachelor's degree at Columbia because he couldn't pass the then-compulsory swimming requirement, where he also dropped out of gym classes; and was excused, owing to a want of coordination, from the student army training corps. You have to imagine a Diogenes whose lamp is unlit not to make a philosophical point but because he doesn't know how to light it.

Mortimer's ineptitude carried on well into his adulthood. In one story, his wife wished to hang a small painting, and, there being no hammer in their Chicago Gold Coast apartment near the Drake Hotel, she sent him out to buy one. Since there were no hardware stores on posh Michigan Avenue nearby, he went directly to Dunhill's where, *mirabile dictu*, no hammers being available, he brought back a gold-plated shower head which he used to hammer in the nail.

A friend of mine who worked for him recalls a love letter Mortimer wrote that contained the sentence: "I love you with all the passions attendant thereto." Mortimer didn't have much luck with women. In the first volume of his autobiography, *Philosopher at Large* (1977), he claims to have married his first wife because both had had their hearts broken by earlier relationships and provides no other reason for what he portrays as a loveless marriage beyond his avowed immaturity. The marriage dragged on for thirty-three years, at the end of which Adler called in, from a hotel in San Francisco, that he wasn't coming home again. In the middle of this marriage, he fell in love with a secretary at the University of Chicago, and his ardent pursuit of her nearly caused his dismissal from the university for behavior regarded, as he puts it, as "intolerable."

Adler poses with John Locke in 1974

Between his first and second marriage, Adler became engaged to a woman who, with her boyfriend, had been hatching a plot which called for insuring him into the stratosphere and then, with the aid of her boyfriend, shaking him down and possibly bumping him off. Adler's friends had her followed by a detective, and when the plot was revealed, he didn't at first want to believe it, then spent months of depression trying to get over it. The world was not too much with our philosopher, but frequently too much for him.

Adler apparently didn't care all that much about money, as long as he had enough of it to go absolutely first class, which he always did. "I must confess I have the propensities of a sybarite," he wrote in *Philosopher at Large*, adding in his second volume of autobiography, *A Second Look in the Rearview Mirror*, "Get over the folly of thinking that there is any conflict between high living and high thinking: Asceticism is for the birds." Impossible to imagine him traveling coach. In Chicago he lunched at the Tavern Club, bought his cigars—along with his hardware—at Dunhill's. At

Above: Adler arguing with William F. Buckley Jr. in 1967. Opposite: Adler in 1988.

Britannica, he hired roomfuls of people for jobs that later turned out to be quite unnecessary. He resembled that Hollywood director who was given an unlimited budget and exceeded it, and he came close to sinking Britannica, Inc. He and Robert Hutchins were America's first six-figure intellectuals.

Hutchins and Adler were, in fact, an intellectual Abbott and Costello act, the one tall, elegant, suave to the highest power, the other short, nervous, bumptious without peer. I once saw Adler present no fewer than eleven reasons to "Bob," as he called him, for adapting a certain policy for the new *Britannica*, at the end of which Hutchins, removing his pipe from his sensuous lips, replied, "I do not consider that an adequate statement of the alternatives," promptly reinserting the pipe in his mouth, leaving Adler in a condition of pure speechless stammer.

Adler referred to his meeting in 1927 with Hutchins, who was then at twenty-eight acting dean of the Yale Law School, as changing "the whole course of my life." It changed Hutchins's quite as much. When Hutchins became president of the University of Chicago in 1929 at the age of thirty, he took Adler along with him. From the outset Adler practiced a form of intellectual tactlessness that made him enemies throughout the university. He let it be known that he thought the philosophy department a bunch of clucks. He wrote papers demeaning social science's pretensions to being legitimate learning, when social science was what the University of Chicago was most famous for. "I continued to challenge my colleagues instead of trying to persuade them," he wrote. Confident of his possession of the truth, he always took out his trusty blunderbuss and fired away. "I can see that you are the kind of young man who is accustomed to winning arguments," Gertrude Stein said to him one night during a visit to Chicago.

Winning arguments but, Miss Stein might have added, losing battles. Hutchins allowed that Adler did much to educate him, chiefly through introducing him to the great-books curriculum that he had acquired in John Erskine's General Honors Seminar at Columbia in the early 1920s. But Adler also did much to complicate Hutchins's life as president of the University of Chicago by alienating large segments of the faculty. Adler could get an argument to the shouting stage quicker than a World Federation wrestler.

The fight at the University of Chicago over what constitutes the right curriculum for undergraduates—which Adler even forty years later falsely characterized as the "controversy over facts and ideas, and intellectualism and anti-intellectualism"—need never have reached the level of furor it did had Hutchins conducted it on his own and not allowed Mortimer to serve as his point man. One of Hutchins's great weaknesses was absolute loyalty to the wrong people. Edward Shils, who was on the scene at the University of Chicago during these years, described the relation of Robert Hutchins and Mortimer Adler by saying that "at least Prince Hal had the good sense, once he became king, to get rid of Falstaff."

I do not know of any genuine contribution that Mortimer Adler made to serious philosophy, though before he went into big-time indexing he was thought a serious Thomist. He also in several of his books insisted on the continuing relevance of ancient philosophers to modern problems, questions, and issues, chief among them Aristotle and St. Thomas. ("Should auld Aquinas be forgot," Hutchins used to joke.) Like a gila monster, who is said never to let go, he was a persistent attacker of pragmatism, from his days in John Dewey's lectures to the end of his life. Sidney Hook once told me that it was proof of Dewey's honorableness that not even Mortimer Adler could drive him into anti-Semitism.

Perhaps Adler's major contribution has been in spreading the gospel of the great books. Hutchins and Adler, along with Scott Buchanan and Stringfellow Barr, took over the dying St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland, where in 1937 they established an undergraduate program based exclusively on great books, with works on ancient and modern mathematics and science added; less intensive programs went into operation for a limited portion of the student body at the University of Notre Dame and at St. Mary's College in California.

I was myself the recipient of a partial great-books education at the Uni-

versity of Chicago, which Hutchins was able to install after the smog of controversy had cleared. Mine was assuredly better than a bad-books education, such as is nowadays offered at almost every school in the land, but education, I have come to conclude, is mostly luck in finding good teachers. I myself never found any at Chicago. (They were there in the persons of Frank Knight, Edward Shils, Joseph Schwab, and a few others, but I didn't search them out.) What I did discover at Chicago was an atmosphere where erudition was taken seriously. Because all the books taught were first class—no textbooks were allowed, no concessions were made to the second-rate for political reasons, and one was graded not by one's teachers but by a college examiner—I gradually learned on my own the important writers and eternal issues, and where to go if one wished to stay with the unending work in progress called one's education.

Adler remained a lifelong advocate for the great books. Through an outfit called the Great Books Foundation, he helped set up seminars in many of the major cities of America, and himself taught in certain such seminars for decades—particularly the Aspen Institute, where, as I like to think, he ruined the holidays of many a corporation executive by forcing him to read John Locke. I have met a few people who have sat in these seminars for several years; they seem greatly to have enjoyed it. What is less clear is what they get out of it. After years of reading Plato, they seem no closer to escaping the cave than the rest of us. "Participants in the Aspen experience," Adler wrote, "were awakened to a realization that, in the scale of values, the Platonic triad of the true, the good, and the beautiful takes precedence over the Machiavellian triad of money, fame, and power." The least cynical of men, Adler probably actually believed this.

In a self-congratulatory mode, Adler spoke of himself getting more and more out of repeated rereadings of his Great Books, finding, as he put it, "a growth of understanding and insight"

within himself. Yet insight and understanding are precisely the two qualities most absent from Mortimer Adler's character. Throughout *Philosopher at Large*, Adler abjures any interest in human personality or behavior. "If I had as much interest in human beings as I do in human thought, this [his autobiography] would be a different story. . . . Throughout my life it has been human thought to which I have reacted with the kind of concern that others have for human beings. I have given hurt sometimes because of this, and sometimes I have suffered it."

Adler is asking here not to be judged by his life but by his works. "An interest in human beings is one thing; an interest in thought another; and one should not be allowed to get in the way of the other," he wrote as a young man in an attack on Will Durant's *The Story of Philosophy*. Yet, despite Adler's admonitions, would anyone doubt it matters that Nietzsche went mad or that Socrates accepted his unjust death with serenity? In Adler's case, his own lack of interest in human beings and their idiosyncrasies destroys much of what passes for his philosophy, especially his educational philosophy.

Adler's ignorance of human psychology—of human nature *tout court*—led him to believe that everyone is educable. In his extreme egotism, he believed that, in his work on the Syntopicon and in revising *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, he had supplied the tools for the perfection of humanity. "The two sets of books together," he wrote in *A Second Look in the Rearview Mirror*, "covered the waterfront; neither alone sufficed." He apparently went to his death with no notion that, in the Syntopicon, he merely created something useless—and with no idea that in his work on the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, ripping it up every which way, allowing a maniacal Lego-set structure to distort content and make information more difficult to find, he had a major hand in helping to destroy something excellent.

When I was working for *Britannica*, he called me one morning, and in much perturbation asked if I thought novels could contain ideas. An amazing question, really, from the great impresario of *The Great Books of the Western World*. Style was simply unavailable to him; he had an active dislike of it, believing that in a thinker such as Santayana it covered up lack of substance. His own writing has a deep dryness—there, I believe, by deliberation. The last time we spoke, he told me that his newest book contained ten typos, and he sent me a copy with a note asking if I could find them. But to do that I would, of course, have had to

read the book, which was not something I felt could be done.

Mortimer's was a powerful and lucid yet coarse and deeply vulgar mind. His must have been an astonishingly high IQ, but his brain functioned in him like a bicep: a large and showy thing with which one cannot finally do all that much but menace and beat down other people. He took logic, upon which he prided himself, all the way out. When he gave the lectures that resulted in the book he called *The Difference of Man and the Difference It Makes*, he argued that it was the power of "propositional speech" and conceptual thought that distinguished human beings from all other animals. If dolphins could utter coherent sentences, I asked him after one of these lectures, would this make them human? "Yes, absolutely," he replied, without a trace of irony. I don't know where Mortimer Adler might be just now, but I like to think he is being lectured to interminably by a very severe and humorless dolphin with an IQ much higher than his own. ♦

BCA

Soldier and Citizen

Thomas Ricks's novel of civil-military relations.

BY MACKUBIN THOMAS OWENS

Americans take good civil-military relations for granted. The Constitution, military officers' strongly ingrained acceptance of the principle of civilian control, and the fact that the services get their personnel from a broad range of the population have combined to give the United States a military stability most other countries can only envy.

A Soldier's Duty
by Thomas E. Ricks
Random House, 320 pp., $24.95

But over the last few years, a number of commentators have suggested that relations between American society and the military are in serious disarray. Thomas Ricks, now the Pentagon correspondent for the *Washington Post*, contributed to that debate in his excellent 1997 book, *Making the Corps*, which argued that there was a growing gap between the military and the society it is sworn to protect.

Now, in *A Soldier's Duty*, Ricks makes much the same point in a first-rate novel about the contemporary American military and its response to social, political, and technological change. Set in the year 2004, it tells the story of two young Army majors, Buddy Lewis and Cindy Sherman. Sherman works for the Army chief of staff, General John Shillingsworth, an old-school officer whose sense of duty was formed in the changes after Vietnam. Lewis serves as aide de camp to the vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General B.Z. Ames, who comes from the Army's special forces and has an understanding of duty that differs considerably from Shillingsworth's.

The officer corps holds the president of the United States in contempt. Despite being a Republican, he has committed two Clinton-like betrayals in the eyes of the officer corps: He has issued an executive order that permits anyone, including homosexuals and the disabled, to serve in the military; and he has stretched military commitments to the breaking point. Shortly after the two majors are posted to the Pentagon, the president commits the military to yet another peacekeeping operation, this time in Afghanistan. Critics in all ranks see this as a quagmire, and some engage in anonymous protest. At the beginning, the dissent is limited to anonymous e-mails sent to officers and civilians from a group calling itself the "Sons of Liberty." But as casualties mount among the ill-trained troops, the protest escalates, first as organized acts of disrespect against the president and senior officers, and finally as actual sabotage of military operations.

As the military confronts the threat within, Lewis and Sherman must answer the central question of military service: What is a soldier's duty? Or, to put it a different way, to what does a soldier owe primary allegiance—to the Constitution, the military as an institution, one's superiors, or one's subordinates? And what happens if these loyalties come into conflict?

Lewis and Sherman belong to the post-Clinton military. During the years of the Clinton administration, many in uniform saw the military as an institution under siege by those who neither understood nor respected it. So widespread was their contempt for President Clinton that officers who once would have kept their negative opinion of the commander-in-chief to themselves now felt free to denounce him in front of their peers and often their subordinates as well.

But the reaction to Clinton was unorganized. The response of the military to President Jim Shick and his policies in *A Soldier's Duty* is orchestrated—and made more dangerous by the Internet, a technology that already has begun to undermine the hierarchical structure of the military.

The novel *A Soldier's Duty* is reminiscent of *Seven Days in May*, Fletcher Kneble's 1962 tale of a military conspiracy to seize the government. In *Seven Days in May*, a cabal of high-ranking officers, led by Air Force General James Mattoon Scott, is enraged by a nuclear disarmament treaty with the Soviet Union and plots a coup. They are stopped when a Marine colonel named Jiggs Casey stumbles onto some clues that alarm him enough to contact a friend who works for the president. Despite the fact that

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he, too, dislikes the treaty, Casey is firmly committed to civilian control of the military. Addressing the president, Casey says the treaty is "your business, yours and the Senate's. You did it, and they agreed, so I don't see how we in the military can question it. I mean we can question it, but we can't fight it. Well, we shouldn't anyway."

Seven Days in May was a product of the Cold War and raised the question of whether a liberal democracy can survive in the nuclear age. *A Soldier's Duty* is more a product of our own time: It doesn't claim we are close to a coup, but it does suggest that a restless military is close to repudiating civilian control because those in uniform think the policies of the civilian leaders are destroying the military as an institution.

In *Seven Days in May*, both President Jordan and his closest friend are veterans of ground combat. In *A Soldier's Duty*, President Shick doesn't "know much more about the military than Clinton did." The civil-military problem Ricks observes in *A Soldier's Duty* is what might be called the "participation gap"—the fact that the civilian elite has largely forsaken military service.

This participation gap is dangerous. Policymakers, ignorant of the requirements of military culture, may subordinate the military's functional imperative—fighting and winning America's wars—to such social imperatives as equal opportunity for homosexuals and "gender equity." At the same time, policymakers without military experience may be overawed by generals and admirals.

At first glance, the stakes seem to have diminished. In *Seven Days in May*, Scott wants to replace Jordan because he believes the president's policies are threatening the security of the nation. In *A Soldier's Duty*, the senior officer who poses the threat to civil-military relations wants merely to become chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

As a number of critics noted at the time, however, the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act—which established the power of the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff—created the most influential military officer in the history of the Republic.

That is fine as long as the officer who holds the position is above reproach. But the character in *A Soldier's Duty* isn't, and an unscrupulous chairman, exercising undue influence over a militarily inexperienced president, constitutes a serious threat. And this danger is exacerbated by the emergence of a politicized military. As a number of commentators have observed, military officers, traditionally professional and apolitical, increasingly identify themselves as politically active Republicans and conservatives. Some have asked what would happen if a conservative officer corps were to discover that Republican politicians were not necessarily pro-military or had other priorities. The current anger on the part of the uniformed military at the perceived failure of the Bush administration to keep its campaign promises is one answer. The scenario Thomas Ricks outlines in *A Soldier's Duty* is another. ♦

BCA

Writing Dangerously

Journalism when it matters.

BY ALEXANDER C. KAFKA

A national business reporter gets a scoop: The Treasury Department, in consultation with the Federal Reserve, is planning to sell dollars for yen on the foreign-exchange market in order to strengthen Japan's currency and stabilize exchange rates. The treasury secretary, outraged at the publication of the story, urges friends at the FBI to arrest the reporter and charge him with espionage for revealing a state economic secret, a crime punishable by death. The reporter is held incommunicado, tried secretly without benefit of a lawyer, and sentenced to twelve years in prison. His source is sentenced to fifteen years.

Words of Fire
Independent Journalists Who Challenge Dictators, Druglords, and Other Enemies of a Free Press
by Anthony Collings
NYU Press, 265 pp., $28.95

A ridiculous scenario? Here, yes; in China, not at all, especially not to Xi Yang, who in 1993 got an analogous scoop from a source at the People's Bank of China. Xi, a Hong Kong-based reporter for the paper *Ming Pao*, learned that China was planning to sell gold reserves on the foreign-exchange market. Central bank chairman and future prime minister Zhu Rongji, outraged by Xi's reports, apparently had him arrested by agents of the State Security Bureau. Xi was comparatively lucky: Protests by human-rights groups worldwide, as China's takeover of Hong Kong neared, pressured Beijing to release him on probation in 1997 after he'd served three and a half years. But to remind journalists that they'd better watch their step, China denied parole to another journalist, Gao Yu, who was serving a six-year sentence for reporting "state secrets" such as that Deng Xiaoping continued to influence economic policy after his retirement.

The cases of Xi and Gao are among dozens brought to us by Anthony Collings in *Words of Fire*, a compelling, dispiriting, and much-needed reality check on the state of press freedom around the world. There's been a steady drumbeat of usually convincing, always predictable, books condemning

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the market-driven prurience and/or the docility of American journalism, among them *The Elements of Journalism* by Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, *Bad News* by Robert Shogan, and *Mediapolitik* by Lee Edwards. Against the backdrop of all this journalistic self-flagellation comes Collings—a former foreign correspondent for the *Wall Street Journal*, the Associated Press, *Newsweek*, and CNN, now a journalism professor at the University of Michigan—to remind us how much journalists elsewhere sacrifice to do their jobs.

Collings cites figures from groups like the Committee to Protect Journalists and Freedom House, both in New York. In 1999, 34 journalists lost their lives because of, or in the course of, their reporting. In 1994, the number was 72. The total for the 1990s was 458. And even more journalists were imprisoned as a result of their work: 181 in 1996, 87 in 1999. To widen the frame a bit, from 1982 through 1999, 892 journalists were killed, 448 were kidnapped or disappeared, and 4,450 were arrested or detained.

Yet Collings argues that press freedom is actually growing. "The cold war is over," he writes. "With it has gone much of the brutal suppression of press freedom by forces on both sides, right and left, ranging from virulent anticommunist military regimes in Latin America to communist dictatorships in what was once the Soviet sphere."

He correlates the growing number of democracies—two-thirds of world governments, under which live three-fifths of the global population—with a rise in literacy and a growing demand for objective news. He divides countries into three groups, those with strong press freedoms (like the United States, Canada, Western Europe, South Africa, Japan, Hong Kong, and Taiwan), those essentially without press freedom (such as China, Cuba, Iraq, Iran, North Korea, and Singapore), and a volatile middle group.

It is these "battleground countries," where liberties fluctuate year to year, that are the focus of *Words of Fire*. Among the most populous are Indonesia, Brazil, Russia, Pakistan, Nigeria, and Mexico. While their cultures vary widely, Collings points out, the countries in this middle category are by and large "developing nations emerging from decades of one-party or military dictatorship. Often their independent journalists in the past have been associated with opposition parties or dissident groups. . . . Neither side—neither government nor independent press—enjoys unqualified support from all major sectors of society. In many cases, the government controls radio and television but not all the newspapers and magazines."

The battleground countries present a paradox—increased press freedom, but continuing violence against journalists. While free nations and dictatorships are relatively stable, partly free nations are often in the throes of social change. "The more movement toward open societies," writes Collings, "the more journalists who try out their newfound freedom." The danger to journalists is greatest in countries where press freedom exists nominally but is severely restricted in practice, either by weak institutions, especially a weak judiciary, as in Peru, Nigeria, and Pakistan, or by pervasive corruption.

Consider the case of J. Jesus Blancornelas, a newspaper publisher and editor in Tijuana, Mexico, engaged in a long-running campaign to expose cocaine trafficking by the powerful Arellano brothers. In 1997, soon after his government-supplied bodyguards were removed without explanation, the sixty-one-year-old Blancornelas and his driver, heading to the newspaper office in their Ford Explorer, were ambushed by ten gunmen. Blancornelas, severely wounded, survived, but his driver, hit by thirty-eight bullets, was not so lucky. Nine years before, Blancornelas's copublisher, Hector Felix Miranda, had been assassinated by shotgun. Blancornelas spoke of his experience with an understatement typical of the crusading journalists

Collings interviewed. "I was doing my job," he said. The Arellano brothers "are the news. I am a journalist."

The book's most heartbreaking case of a fearless reporter battling organized crime and, one presumes, corrupt government elements, is that of Irish investigative reporter Veronica Guerin, who covered Dublin's underworld for the *Sunday Independent*. In 1994, after she wrote about the assassination of gangster Martin Cahill ("the General"), shots were fired at her home. Several months later, she profiled the leading suspect in the largest robbery in Irish history, and the next day a masked gunman broke into her home and shot her in the thigh.

Though no arrests were made, Guerin persisted, writing simply, "I am letting the public know exactly how this society operates." According to colleague Alan Byrne, when Guerin found out who had ordered her shooting, "she went, on crutches, to see the person to let them know she wasn't scared." Soon after, when she met a crime-linked businessman for an interview, he "slammed her head against her car and threatened to kill her if she wrote anything about him."

Interestingly, Guerin's confrontational methods were not just a gutsy means of gathering information—Guerin is not portrayed as flamboyant or self-aggrandizing—but a way around the country's Official Secrets Act, which barred sourcing from government documents. By confronting criminals face to face, she hoped to provoke them into commenting on the record about allegations against them—in order to get their names into print without exposing her paper to lawsuits.

You know how this story ends. As she was on the verge of naming Dublin's three biggest heroin dealers, on June 26, 1996, Guerin was attacked in her car at a traffic light. Two men drove up on a motorcycle. One of them smashed her window and shot her in the face and chest six times. Guerin, thirty-seven years old, died almost instantly. She left behind a husband and six-year-old son.

Her murder was greeted with outrage, and her funeral was attended by Ireland's president, prime minister, and the chief of the armed forces, as well as Dublin's archbishop. Leading Irish and British journalists vowed to carry on her brand of reporting. But elsewhere attempts at such professional solidarity have fared poorly. The Mexican Society of Journalists, for instance, has had a negligible effect on the prosecution of crimes against members of the press. More than two years after the attack on Blancornelas, prosecutors had brought no charges.

Collings's accounts of these and other cases are gripping. If he can be faulted, it is for being too hopeful. He is oddly intent, particularly for a man held at gunpoint while reporting from Beirut in the 1980s, on drawing a partly sunny conclusion from his research. Thus, he too eagerly takes heart from Internet-facilitated resistance to Milosevic during Serbia's implosion. He attributes journalists' defiance of the censors to "that universal human trait of refusing to be beaten down into silence," despite his own ample evidence that self-censorship in the face of dictators and ruthless criminals is actually commonplace. For every crusader who communicates a dangerous truth, Collings gives us a journalist beaten, bought, or cowed into silence in one of the hot spots of Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, or Latin America. Many, at the border between courage and self-destruction, understandably find the cost of crossing too high.

If journalistic freedom has expanded since the end of the Cold War, the trend is endangered by even the mild economic downturn and political turbulence since the book went to press. Collings's own illustrations suggest that nationalism, civil war, and ethnic strife will take as great a toll on journalists as did the Cold War. The cases he presents inspire more fear than hope. His work reminds jaded Western journalists that more is at stake in delivering the news than scoops about Rudy Giuliani's mistress troubles. It reminds all of us that in most of the world freedom of the press remains a principle under siege. ♦

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A Powerful Pol Redecorates his Apartment His Way, With Killer Results!

Body:

One day a few years ago, Congressman Gary **Condit** realized he just had to redecorate his Washington apartment. "It was looking aged and saggy, like it was 24 or 25 years old," says the dashing politician, who bears a striking resemblance to Harrison Ford. "I wanted something professional yet sensual, but which could bear a lot of foot traffic. I'm a night owl and I mix work and pleasure quite a bit, and so I needed sturdy, sound proof beams, in case I wanted to tie anything to the walls."

Instead of going to one of the established interior design firms, **Condit** decided to hire young designers, fresh out of college, high school, and in some cases, even the Girl Scouts, to help him realize his dream. And after running through 35 of them, his masterpiece was complete. "Mentoring is really what I'm all about. Some of those gals gave their heart and soul to the project."

He presented them with some design challenges. "I really love cactus," the dashing member confesses. "And people are always giving me terrariums. So I need a place for them. Also closets. I have tons of shirts and I really like it when they're color coordinated. So walk in closets were essential."

The results, say his friend, Marina Ein, are "a home run."

A home run with some surprising features. The entry alcove, where **Condit** greets his political staff, has a changing room and black lights illuminating a glowing shag carpet. For the kitchen, **Condit** ordered a special fridge that delivers whipped cream at the touch of a button. "My favorite movie is *9 1/2 Weeks* with Kim Basinger," **Condit** explains, "It's really what motivated me to go into politics." And it's rare that you find a home office with its own Jacuzzi and ceiling mirrors.

The highlight of the apartment is without question the bedroom, with its raised heart-shaped waterbed, the mirrored disco ball hanging from the ceiling and the built in bleachers for spectators. The bedroom has its own separate exit, leading straight to a secluded alley, a feature fashionable in Clinton-era Washington.

Condit and his designers also came up with a string of creative design solutions. The rawhide doorknobs really hide fingerprints. The speckled bathroom floor masks dirt and stains. The built-in magazine racks neatly hold **Condit**'s voluminous collections of *Teen Beat* and *Seventeen*. And best of all are the smudge-proof countertops. "My problems just disappear!" **Condit** exults.

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