the weekly Standard

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ARE THE JESUITS CATHOLIC?
PAUL SHAUGHNESSY

Uncle Sam's Makeover

The State Department's answer to Osama bin Laden is to "redefine America."

BY STEPHEN F. HAYES

REALIZING BUSINESS POTENTIAL

The question on many minds these days is: How can the U.S. economy regain its late-1990s vigor?

Economists say the most important driver of long-term economic growth is productivity—the output workers produce per hour. Increasing productivity enables companies to pay higher wages without raising prices, thus improving our standard of living.

The importance of technological innovation in sustaining productivity growth is widely recognized today. But during the 1970s and 1980s, stubbornly sluggish business productivity led some economists to question the value of many companies' extensive investments in information systems.

"We see the computer age everywhere but in the productivity statistics," commented Nobel laureate Robert Solow of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1987.

But the benefits became clear as fast-growing technology industries—many of them using state-of-the-art technology to boost their own output—became increasingly significant contributors to the overall economy. Beginning in 1995, U.S. productivity accelerated to rates of growth not seen in two decades, and an economic boom followed. Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan credited technology with enabling the nation to achieve faster growth than previously thought possible without sparking inflation.

And as the economy slowed last year, technology helped businesses to adjust quickly. As a result, growth in productivity remained strong, building the basis for a recovery.

"The fact that firms were able to respond quickly to signs of a slowdown may be due to better information systems," said economist Hal R. Varian of the University of California, Berkeley.

Further confirmation of the link between high tech and high productivity has come from studies of hundreds of large firms by MIT economist Erik Brynjolfsson, who concluded that information technology increases output more than any other type of capital investment. Brynjolfsson found that gains from information technology grow over time as workers use it to improve how they do business.

History teaches us that new business processes made possible by technology can eventually multiply technology's direct benefits many times over. For instance, electric motors were used to automate manufacturing plants beginning in the late 1800s. But the most significant productivity gains came later, when business innovations that relied on electricity, such as Henry Ford's assembly line, made fuller use of the technology.

Productivity may grow even faster this decade than in the late 1990s.

Indeed, applying technology to create and advance new business processes may be one of the most rewarding investments organizations can make today. Recently Chairman Greenspan suggested that U.S. productivity may grow even faster this decade than in the late 1990s as businesses processes are re-engineered to realize the full benefits of technology investments.

Just as Henry Ford found ways to revolutionize manufacturing, the challenge today is to make the best use of information to make businesses even more agile, efficient and productive.

As workers who deal principally in information become a larger part of the work force, we need a deeper understanding of the impact of technology in the workplace. Productivity measurements used today may not fully reflect the benefits of new capabilities such as telecommuting, e-mail and supply chain integration.

New tools are needed to help us evaluate qualitative as well as quantitative results of information work in order to optimize business processes, improve financial results and guide innovation for organizations of all sizes.

Microsoft is collaborating with other industry leaders and with top economists to better understand information worker productivity. Our goal: to help people and businesses realize their fullest potential.

One in a series of essays on technology and society. More information is available at microsoft.com/issues.

Microsoft

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BPA INTERNATIONAL

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What Did Royce Lamberth Know . . . ?

For a press corps obsessing over who knew what when before September 11, there was little attention paid last week to the following revelation in *Newsweek* (THE SCRAPBOOK believes in crediting reporters, but there were 11 bylines on this particular piece):

"*Newsweek* has learned there was one other major complication as America headed into that threat-spiked summer. In Washington, Royce Lamberth, chief judge of the special federal court that reviews national-security wiretaps, erupted in anger when he found that an FBI official was misrepresenting petitions for taps on terror suspects. Lamberth prodded Ashcroft to launch an investigation, which reverberated throughout the bureau. From the summer of 2000 on into the following year, sources said, the FBI was forced to shut down wiretaps of Qaeda-related suspects connected to the 1998 African embassy bombing investigation. 'It was a major problem,' said one source familiar with the case, who estimated that 10 to 20 Qaeda wiretaps had to be shut down, as well as wiretaps into a separate New York investigation of Hamas. The effect was to stymie terror surveillance at exactly the moment it was needed most: requests from both Phoenix and Minneapolis for wiretaps were turned down."

Justice Benjamin Cardozo famously complained that the prisoner shouldn't go free "because the constable has blundered." This account raises an even weightier conundrum: Should terrorists go unmonitored because a judge is ticked off at an FBI official? As the finger-pointing proceeds in the coming weeks, the role of the 1978 Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act—which created this judicial oversight mechanism—should not go unexamined. ♦

The Godfather of Voluntarism

When Milton Friedman came to Washington recently, the high and mighty gathered to honor (and listen to) the great free market economist. Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan rescheduled a speech in Chicago to attend. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and sidekick Paul Wolfowitz showed up. So did former Attorney General Ed Meese, White House adviser Larry Lindsey, and economist Gary Becker, like Friedman a Nobel Prize winner. And President Bush delivered a tribute and hosted a White House lunch for Friedman and his wife, Rose.

Bush said that when Friedman began his work—he'll be 90 this July—"the conventional wisdom held that capitalism's days were numbered." Now all that's changed thanks partly to Friedman, whose economic ideas are "at work" in Chile, Russia, Sweden, even China, and of course in this country. He's also a social reformer. Bush called him "the intellectual godfather" of the all-volunteer army and a fierce advocate of school choice. "We're lucky that Milton Friedman flunked some of his qualifying exams to become an actuary and became an economist instead."

Friedman, sporting an Adam Smith tie, at the White House.

Friedman is famous for simple but scintillating economic explanations. The problem with the federal budget, he's often said, is not the size of the deficit but the share of the national economy the government claims. At the White House, Friedman offered a succinct lesson. Those who spend their own money on themselves are careful about how much they spend and what it buys. Those who spend someone else's money on themselves don't care what they spend but are attentive to what it buys. Those who spend their own money on someone else are careful how much they spend but careless about what it buys. Those who spend someone else's money on someone else aren't careful about how much or what it buys. That last case, Friedman exclaimed, "that's government." ♦

Give Harvard an A (or maybe just a B+)

The first step in fighting addiction is acknowledging you have a problem. So THE SCRAPBOOK is not a little proud of Harvard University for acknowledging its decades-long habit of passing out top grades and graduation honors like some minimum-wage cornerboy handing out flyers for a discount shoe store.

About half of all the grades given out at Harvard during 2001 were A's and A minuses. And nearly 90 percent of last year's graduating class received some form of honors. The school had

become so promiscuous at awarding distinction that our occasional contributor, professor of government Harvey C. Mansfield, last year felt compelled to announce a double grading system for his classes, giving his students an "ironic grade," indexed for grade inflation and entered into the official records, along with a second informal grade based on actual merit.

But not only did Harvard acknowledge its problem, it has set out to change its ways. From now on, no more than 60 percent of the graduating class will receive honors. And the grading system is being reformed to make the B-plus more common relative to the A-minus. The reforms, of course, depend on professors' monitoring themselves to reduce the number of A's. Nevertheless, Harvard president Larry Summers deserves at least an unironic B+ for his capable work on this important question. ♦

The Original Axis of Evil

Who says Americans don't have the attention span for a long war? Just last Monday, May 20, the Office of Special Investigations (OSI) of the Justice Department succeeded in deporting to Romania one Nikolaus Schiffer, an American-born citizen, who in 1943 voluntarily joined the Waffen SS (and hence surrendered his right to U.S. citizenship). According to OSI's press release, Schiffer "served at the Sachsenhausen and Hersbruck concentration camps in Germany, the Majdanek concentration camp and Trawniki SS training camp in Nazi-occupied Poland, and on two so-called Nazi 'death marches' to the Auschwitz and Dachau concentration camps."

Of course justice can never truly be done for the crimes Schiffer *volunteered* to take part in. But his deportation does bring, in the words of OSI director Eli Rosenbaum, "a measure of justice," however small. More important, Schiffer's deportation—the culmination of a series of lawsuits begun in 1989—serves to remind us of just how recent was the almost successful attempt to exterminate the Jews of Europe. In light of the grotesque equations of Israelis to Nazis that have been spouted by Yasser Arafat and his sympathizers, to say nothing of the wave of anti-Jewish sentiment in Europe, it is useful to recall what the character of a genuine Nazi is. Such a reminder can enable us to identify those who today embody Nazism's most distinctive trait, fanatical hatred of Jews—a passion that seems as enduring as it is monstrous. ♦

Help Wanted

Casual

Book Swining

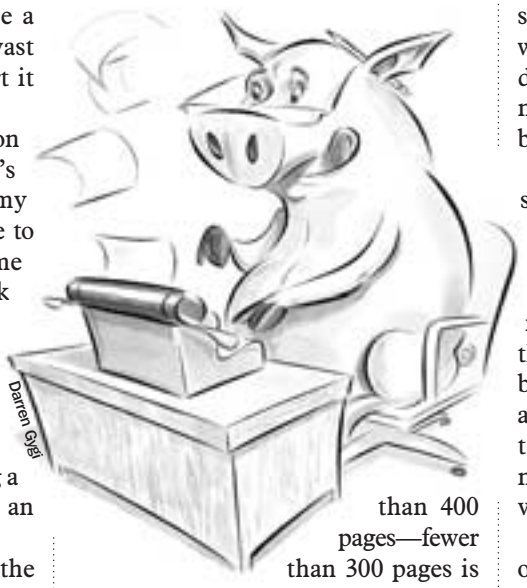
My efficient editor at Houghton Mifflin has just sent me an e-mail informing me that finished copies of a new book I have written will come off the press on May 31, with books to be shipped to bookstores on June 6, after which I shall receive my author's shipment of—if I remember correctly—twenty copies. The physical object, the artifact, the commodity, the actual book at long last will appear. This ought to be a pleasing moment, and for the vast most part it is. But in smaller part it presents complications.

First among these is the question of to whom to give my author's copies. Some go to members of my family, some to close friends, some to those writers who have sent me copies of their own books. The risk of hurting some people's feelings by not sending them a copy is worrisome. But there is also the risk of sending copies to people who, harsh truth to tell, can live quite nicely without them. Sending a person a free book is not always an unmitigated good deed.

"You know, my dear Epstein," the late Arnaldo Momigliano, the historian of the ancient world, once told me, in his strong Piedmontese accent, "the cheapest way to acquire a book remains to buy it." I puzzled over this Zen koanish-like statement for a good bit, until I realized that what Arnaldo meant was that if you buy a book at least you don't have to read the damn thing. But if you are given a book, or even lent one, you are stuck—under an obligation to read it and comment upon it.

I know that when I give someone a copy of one of my books I feel that they are under the obligation to read it and only under a slightly lesser obligation to like it rather a lot. Writers, as perhaps you may not be aware, are swine. "I have never known a writer who was not vain and egotistical," writes the German critic Marcel Reich-Ranicki in his recent book *The Author of Himself*, "unless he was a particularly bad writer." By this standard, I turn out to be quite a good writer.

Viewing things the other way round, I am generally pleased to be sent a copy of someone else's book. True, I prefer that the book be of fewer than 400 pages—fewer than 300 pages is even better—and not on the subject of, say, the Haymarket riots, organ transplantation, or the scandal of preschool education.



I check the index of all the books I am sent for my name; also the acknowledgments for the same reason. (Did I mention that writers are swine?) Once I was sent four copies of the same book by an astonishingly prolific author and discovered, lo, the book was dedicated to me. The dedication noted my wit and wisdom, though, oddly, failed to mention my appealing humility. Although I didn't much care for the fellow, I was, momentarily, touched. Then I remembered that he was said to have written and edited more than 250 books, and thought: Being the dedicatee of one of his books was perhaps less than a thunderous big deal; I mean, it wasn't as if he had lent me twenty bucks. (Swine, I tell you, writers are utter swine.)

People given books by the author prefer them signed. I don't at all mind doing so. A signed book cannot be returned to the bookstore. Book signings are also a way of stimulating the sale of a book, of course, and if the author is someone popular enough, which usually means someone known from his or her regular appearances on television, people line up in large numbers to acquire the book with the author's signature. The other side of this is the sad story of the unknown author. I recently attended a booksigning for a former student of mine where eight people showed up, and I didn't stick around to find out how many of these actually bought the book.

I have had people I don't know send me books for my signature. There are two reasons for their doing this, I suppose: They think a signed copy somehow or other talismanic, producing magical effects; or they believe a signed first edition of a book may one day be extremely valuable. What they cannot know is that the really valuable copies of most of my books are the second editions—valuable because, alas, they don't exist.

Signed books can leave a trail. Ten or so years ago I was browsing in Powell's used bookshop in Hyde Park in Chicago and discovered, with a smile, that Saul Bellow had sold books inscribed to him by the then still living critic Irving Howe. I failed to smile when, a few years later, I discovered a signed copy of an early book of mine on the shelf of another Chicago used bookshop. The book was inscribed to a woman writer who is my contemporary: "To dear X, in friendship." To this day I wish I had bought the book, and returned it to the now much less dear X, with the amended inscription: "[Still] in friendship[?]" Swine, as I say, real swine.

Joseph Epstein

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U.N. vs. David Tell, II

In recent weeks The Weekly Standard has published a number of articles concerning the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA). These have contained a large number of serious inaccuracies and misinterpretations. Among these articles were David Tell's "The U.N.'s Israel Problem" (May 6) and Charles Krauthammer's "Kofi's Choice" and Dov B. Fischer's "The Overseers of Jenin" (May 13). Please allow me to set the record straight.

1. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) was set up in 1949 to provide humanitarian services to Palestinian refugees who had lost their homes during the war of 1948, pending a political solution to their problem. (Unlike the Jews who fled from Arab countries in the same period—and the Muslims who fled India in 1947—the Palestinian refugees had no state of their own to go to.) This role is quite different from the mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which is mainly to ensure that states fulfill their obligations to protect refugees and asylum-seekers under the 1951 Refugee Convention.

2. Israel specifically requested that UNRWA continue to play its role in the occupied territory after 1967, and since then has frequently repeated that it considers UNRWA's humanitarian work a major factor for stability in the region. This is because UNRWA, far from keeping the refugees in a state of dependency as your writers have claimed, has given them health and educational indicators that compare very well with those in the region, and have thereby enabled the vast majority to support themselves and their families. UNRWA's micro-finance lending and other similar programs have won awards for helping refugees to help themselves out of poverty.

3. UNRWA does not "wholly fund" or "largely administer" Jenin or any other refugee camp. It simply provides services to refugees, some of whom live in "camps," the majority of whom, in the West Bank, do not. The so-called "camps" are in fact urban ghettos without any clear perimeter or central administration. Enforcement of law and order in them is the responsibility of the civil power—which, in the West Bank and Gaza between 1967 and 1994, was the Israeli government. In the latter year, under the Oslo accords, the camps in "Area A" (including Jenin) were transferred to the Palestinian Authority (PA).

4. Likewise, it is the civil power that approves the textbooks and curriculum used in schools, including those run by UNRWA. Under the Israeli administration, the textbooks were old Jordanian ones, dating from before 1967. Since 1994, the PA has been replacing these with new ones which, according to a study by Prof. Nathan Brown of the George Washington University, published in November 2001, "make no mention of any location as Palestine outside the territories occupied by Israel in 1967," and "go to some lengths to avoid saying anything about Israel at all," the few exceptions being "hardly pejorative." Israeli academics have confirmed Prof. Brown's findings, and the Israeli representative to the United Nations has praised UNRWA's own initiatives towards promoting tolerance and nonviolent conflict resolution in its schools.

5. UNRWA is scrupulous about protecting its installations against misuse by any person or group. Only once, in Lebanon in 1982, has there been credible evidence of such misuse by Palestinians, and it was promptly dealt with. Since then the Israeli authorities have made no specific allegations about abuse of UNRWA facilities. Nor have they lodged any complaint with UNRWA about the official or private activities of any UNRWA staff member—though they have arrested hundreds of them, and in each case UNRWA immediately writes asking for information about the grounds for the arrest.

6. UNRWA employees stand for election to the staff union on their own merits (not on political slates), and UNRWA strictly enforces the rules which oblige employees to behave with integrity and impartiality in their official functions.

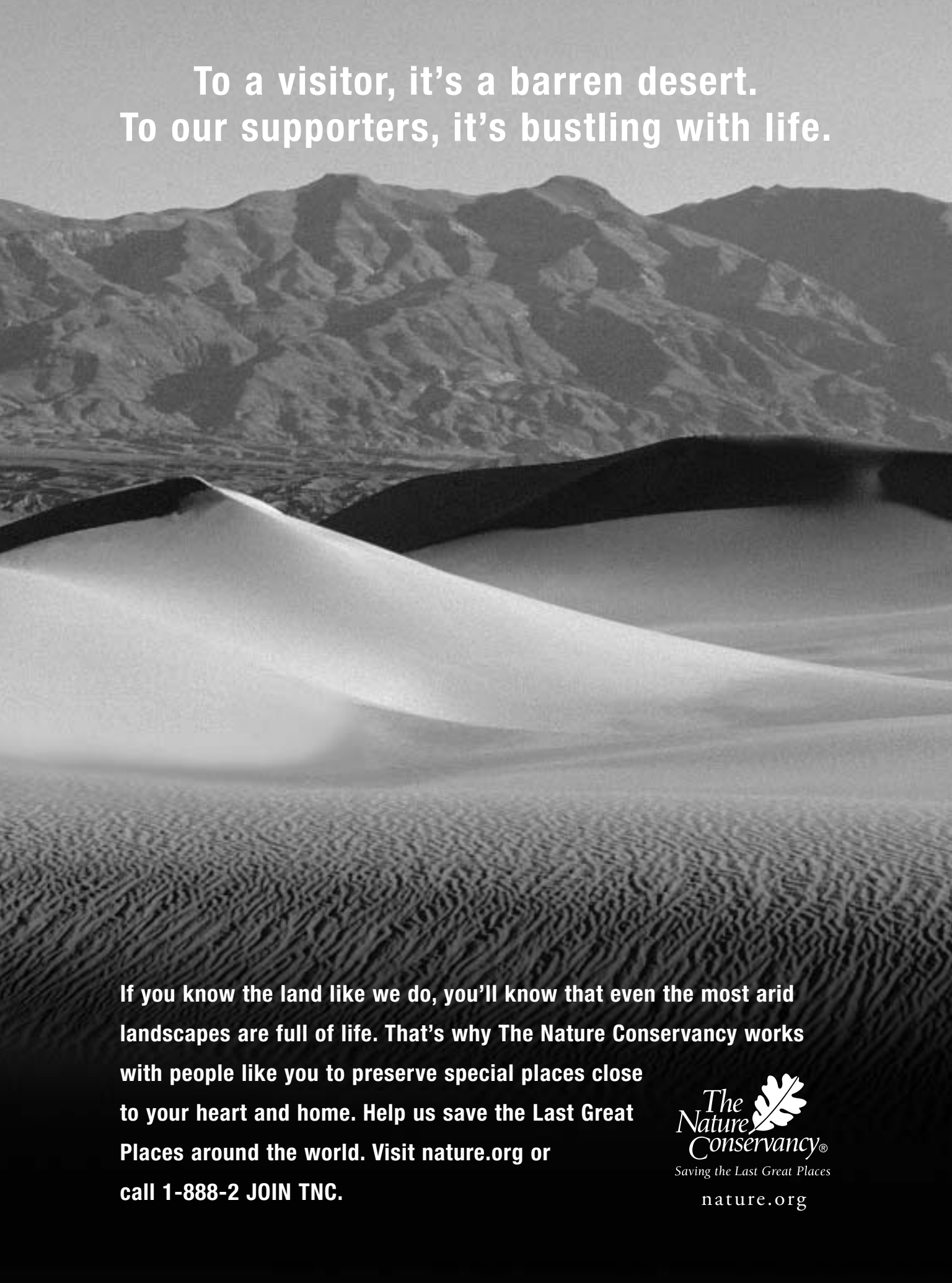
7. UNRWA has never hired buses to take refugees on tours of Israel.

8. The Weekly Standard's characterization of Peter Hansen, UNRWA's Commissioner General as an anti-Semitic "peasant-in-chief" is pure slander and an insult to the intelligence of the magazine's readership. When Hansen spoke about bodies "piling up," he was referring to overflowing morgues he had seen with his own eyes. The mass graves he described were created outside Ramallah Hospital by medical staff and were filmed by the international media, as were the IDF helicopter attacks on Jenin camp and other civilian areas. Peter Hansen's honest, humanitarian response to questions from an interviewer hardly merits the character assassination to which The Weekly Standard has stooped.

Paul McCann
Chief, Public Information Office
UNRWA Headquarters Gaza

David Tell responds: Should The Weekly Standard remain a going concern for another hundred years, it is almost inconceivable that we will ever again have occasion to publish anything nearly so dishonest as the letter above.

With his first two complaints—directed against Dov B. Fischer's capsule history of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency ("The Overseers of Jenin," May 13)—that organization's top spokesman establishes a position too patently absurd to waste much ink on. UNRWA, he writes, cannot be held to the slightest degree responsible for the immiseration of those Palestinian refugees it has housed, fed, taught, doctored, and employed for the past 53 years.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This, no less, because Palestinian refugees, flush with UNRWA's award-winning "micro-financing lending" and whatnot, aren't actually miserable at all. It's quite possible that Mr. McCann is the only human being on Earth who even pretends to believe such a thing; graphic evidence of abject squalor in UNRWA installations has been a regular feature of international television broadcasts for decades, after all. At very least, McCann's claim should prove surprising news indeed to his colleagues in UNRWA's Department of External Relations, which is at this very moment conducting a "Fourth Emergency Appeal" for donations—on grounds that West Bank and Gaza refugees face a "stark and uncertain future," fully half of them having fallen into poverty.

Mr. McCann next turns his attention to my own recent editorial charging, among other things, that UNRWA must be considered complicit in Palestinian terrorism launched from within its compounds ("The U.N.'s Israel Obsession," May 6). That a U.N. official should decline to acknowledge the existence of such terrorism is unremarkable. That UNRWA should effectively deny the existence of its own refugee camps, however, is something else altogether. His agency neither funds, administers, nor exercises police authority in "Jenin or any other refugee camp," McCann insists. Instead, UNRWA merely extends "services" to Palestinians who live in "urban ghettos without any clear perimeter or central administration."

Here again, Mr. McCann has conveniently ignored what UNRWA itself, in every other circumstance, routinely describes as its mission. These purportedly indistinct neighborhoods McCann now airily dismisses as "so-called 'camps'" are called precisely that on UNRWA's website, for example: "official camps" and "recognized refugee camps," each of which the agency specifically identifies down to the exact number of quarter-acre section *dunums* it comprises. A "camp," according to the "working definition" McCann's front-office superiors have formally adopted and publicized, "is a plot of land placed at the disposal of UNRWA by the host government for accommodating Palestine refugees and for setting up facilities to cater to their needs."

True enough, the provisioning of hooligans to impose "law and order" on the streets of its camps is no longer among the catering services UNRWA offers; Palestinian Authority "policemen," whose salaries the agency previously paid, now perform their lynchings on someone else's dime. But it is also true, such technicalities aside, that a series of Security Council resolutions still in force oblige relevant U.N. representatives to take "appropriate steps to help create a secure environment" in all "situations where refugees [are] . . . vulnerable to infiltration by armed elements." Mr. McCann's letter explicitly defies this mandate. Only when the "armed elements" in question are Israeli, it would seem, does UNRWA become energetically "scrupulous" about protecting "its installations" from taint by violence.

AP / Wide World Photos

Yasser Arafat and UNRWA's Peter Hansen

McCann's account of the history of Palestinian schoolbook publishing is a farce. Israel's U.N. ambassador will no doubt be astonished to find his name invoked on its behalf. Professor Nathan Brown, on the other hand, clearly intends that his November 2001 "study" be put to such use; those passages in the document to which McCann here refers neatly complement the standard apologetics issued by Yasser Arafat's Ministry of Education. Trouble is, though they have concealed by omission all the genuinely essential facts of the case, neither the Palestinian Authority nor Professor Brown nor Mr. McCann has ever bothered to dispute those facts. Which are as follows:

From 1969 through most of 1995, while West Bank and Gaza schools were being administered by Israel, teachers and students employed Jordanian (and Egyptian) curricular material that had been cleansed of inflammatory political and racial content under a system sponsored by UNESCO. In October 1995, following the transfer of educational responsibilities required by the Oslo accords, UNESCO abrogated this system at the request of the Arab League, and the Palestinian Authority then immediately restored *unexpurgated* versions of the Jordanian and Egyptian textbooks to its classrooms. It is beyond serious dispute that these books, still widely in use, are violently anti-Semitic and shot-through with exhortations to "martyrdom" in the war against "Zionist oppression." For that matter, Prof. Nathan Brown to the contrary notwithstanding, it is beyond serious dispute that the newer, PA-commissioned textbooks gradually being introduced in UNRWA schools are . . . violently anti-Semitic and shot-through with exhortations to "martyrdom" in the war against "Zionist oppression"—*as UNWRA has itself previously admitted*.

In 1998, directed to do so by Rep. Peter Deutsch and other concerned congressional appropriators, the U.S. State Department formally requested that UNRWA conduct an internal investigation of allegations that PA-generated curricular materials were infected with hatred of Jews. In response, UNRWA tried mightily to whitewash the problem. One of the books in question, for instance, turned out to include such evocative lessons as this: "Treachery and disloyalty are character traits of the Jews and one should beware of them"; UNRWA's researchers advised the State

Department that the phrase could not fairly be considered offensive because it described actual "historical events." Nevertheless, certain aspects of the Palestinian curriculum proved too much even for U.N. functionaries to swallow. In January 1999, the State Department reported to Congress that "UNRWA's review did reveal instances of anti-Semitic characterizations and content in these host-authority texts."

The PA's education ministry, incidentally, freely acknowledges that it "has not mentioned Israel borders on maps" in those texts. The books have never been revised or withdrawn. And various reports posted on UNRWA's website boast about the fact that "UNRWA staff participated in the design and development of the Palestinian curriculum."

More than a thousand Israelis are dead as a consequence of hundreds of terrorist attacks originating in UNRWA refugee camps since 1982, but still Paul McCann has the gall to contend that not once in that 20-year period has there been "credible evidence" that Palestinians have "misused" his agency's facilities. Operation Defensive Shield, the Israeli army's most recent anti-terrorist sweep through those facilities, has just produced an enormous cache of hard evidence that UNRWA refugee camps are riddled with small-arms factories, explosives laboratories, and suicide-bombing cells. Prime Minister Sharon's office has just in the past few weeks asked the U.N. to "break the bond of silence regarding the misuse of the refugee camps," and Israel's U.N. ambassador has pleaded for the General Assembly, at minimum, to repudiate "the use of a U.N.-administered camp as a center for terrorist activity." But still Paul McCann is unimpressed. He has yet to see any sufficiently "specific allegations."

I have no idea what information appears on the printed ballots used in leadership elections for UNRWA's employees unions. But news accounts of those elections dating back at least 10 years—in both the local Arabic press and the international media—report the results exclusively in terms of political affiliation: this many seats for Hamas, that many for Islamic Jihad, and so forth. It cannot be a secret to UNRWA headquarters that many of its staff members are sympathizers or actual members of terrorist organizations. They are hardly shy about it. Last July, in the presence of dozens of journalists, the junior high school in UNRWA's Jabalya refugee camp hosted an open-air conference at which Hamas spiritual leader Ahmed Yassin urged hundreds of students to martyrdom—only to be followed on stage by one Saheil Alhinadi, officially representing UNRWA's teachers' union, who led the crowd in a hymn of praise to suicide bombers.

"UNRWA has never hired buses to take refugees on tours of Israel," Mr. McCann tells us. I'm not sure what this business about who "hired" the buses is supposed to prove. What it cannot disprove, in any case, is the point I was trying to make by mentioning the phenomenon in the first place: that UNRWA actively and unapologetically abets and sustains the basic engine of Palestinian terrorism, the irredentist fantasy that refugee-camp residents will someday realize their "right of return" to property within Israel long ago "stolen" by "the Jews." Every year, during the May anniversary of Al-Nakba, what the Palestinians call the "disaster" of Israel's Independence Day, UNRWA-financed projects like the Union of Youth Activities Centers sponsor gigantic "right of return" rallies throughout the West Bank and Gaza. From which rallies, the state of the intifada permitting, buses then take refugees on tours of "their" Israeli villages. A first-person diary of one such trip is prominently featured on the Dheisheh refugee camp website. News footage of another such trip has been broadcast by the BBC World Service. Yet another such trip has been recorded for posterity in a video documentary nominated for one of this year's Academy Awards. Paul McCann protests too little.

A final word about Mr. McCann's boss, UNRWA commissioner-general Peter Hansen. No man has done more to circulate lurid fictions about an Israeli mass murder of unarmed civilians in the West Bank's Jenin refugee camp—or done it with greater relish—than Peter Hansen. As Paul McCann reminds us, Hansen once spoke of bodies "piling up" in Ramallah Hospital, site of an entirely separate, and equally fanciful, Israeli "atrocity." But Hansen has otherwise devoted the bulk of his imaginative energies to Jenin. The official transcript admits of no other interpretation: His reference to "incidences of mass graves," during an April 5 teleconference from UNRWA's Jerusalem office, involved not Ramallah but Jenin. Ditto for Hansen's report, to the Reuters news agency, that "armed activists who were there obviously slipped away before the Israelis moved in—so the exercise of force was mainly vis-à-vis the civilian population." Ditto for Hansen's April 7 announcement that "helicopters are strafing civilian areas," something that simply never happened, though McCann now bizarrely suggests there is film of it.

Claiming to have "seen the reality with my own eyes," Peter Hansen, speaking for the United Nations, has called it "no exaggeration" that a "massacre was carried out" against the civilian population of Jenin by the state of Israel. There is nothing "honest" or "humanitarian" about this accusation. It is a lie—a lie which, though long since thoroughly debunked, the dishonorable Peter Hansen and his dishonorable agency obstinately refuse to recant. ♦

"Tom's Mad Daschle to Defeat"

"Among other things," said General and President Ulysses S. Grant, "we don't learn from history all we should, especially the most vulnerable of us."

"How, General?" I asked.

"Well, in the War Between the States, as the South called the Civil War, Mr. Lincoln got a lot of unwelcome advice from would-be armchair generals who doubled as politicians. By itself, that was enough aggravation. In addition, there was a segment of commanding generals who failed President Lincoln."

"There surely were," I said.

"Up there," the General pointed, "in a Valhalla, so to speak, we professional soldiers follow all that's happening in Afghanistan and the Middle East."

"So, Mr. President?" I wanted him to continue.

"So there's this," General Grant went on; "it's difficult enough to know what to do on the spot in Afghanistan. The good Senator, Tom Daschle, didn't attend West Point. It's tough for the military to take what he likes or doesn't like about how the war is fought on the battlefield in that country. In Washington, D.C., the Senator is thousands of miles removed from the fighting. True?"

"Yes, Sir, true," I assured him.

"Were I Senator Daschle, or a close friend of his, I'd suggest he 'stick to his knitting' as the saying goes. He may think he's making points. He doesn't remember LBJ, his fellow pols and how they tried to run the Vietnamese War from the Oval Office. It was as much of a tragic disgrace how they tied the hands of General Westmoreland as it was a tragic disgrace that the United States lost the war itself."

"But General, what about General MacArthur and President Truman in Korea?" it concerned me.

"Much as I admired the great General MacArthur and all he always did to add to the Nation's glory, I have to say this," said President Grant.

"What, Sir?" I was impatient to hear.

"It's not so much what the heroic general did as the way he did it. That's to say, vis-a-vis the politicians back home, he went public. He should not have. It was not the American way. Mr. Truman was Commander in Chief," General Grant made clear.

"More detail, please, Mr. President," I requested.

"Simply, it's not American. It's not a nation run by the military. General MacArthur should have gone to the president personally, man to man, to his superior. I did with Mr. Lincoln. He won," insisted General Grant.

"Fair enough, right enough," I agreed.

"Look, my friend," the General continued, "a war can be lost as easily in the Oval Office in Washington D.C. as on the battlefield of Afghanistan, the Middle East, or anywhere. You don't go to a pacifist to be told how to fight any more than you'd go to politicians to be told how to fight a battle. I know what you're thinking. Winston Churchill went to Sandhurst, and Jefferson Davis went to West Point, but Senator Daschle went to neither."

"I follow you," I said. I did.

"Won't someone tell the Senator, in a nice way, to let the generals command, and the politicians comment sensibly. Any soldier would be out of place in the Senate floor, as any Senator-politician would be out of place on a battlefield making war."

"Would that Senator Daschle would hear you, General," I said.

"Just this much more," General Grant told me. "If the Senator doesn't hear from me, he's sure to hear from his constituents. Why? Simply because there's a place for everything and everything in place, the Senate floor and the battlefield," said the General between puffs on his cigar.

the weekly Standard

Going Wobbly?

Is the Bush administration going wobbly? Is the president preparing to back off the bold pledges he made to the American people four months ago in his State of the Union address? The president warned us then that the clock was ticking in Iraq. Saddam Hussein was working hard to acquire weapons of mass destruction. Bin Laden, al Qaeda, and other terrorists were eager to get their hands on such weapons. And it was only a matter of time before the ultimate horror of terrorists armed with nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons confronted us all. Bush proclaimed that he was determined to confront and eliminate this threat, and he called on Americans to gird themselves for the difficult struggle that lay ahead. And he told us time was not on our side. In the weeks and months that followed, Bush repeatedly let it be known, publicly and privately, that he was committed to removing Saddam Hussein from power, and by military force if necessary, which he presumed it would be.

Was it all hot air? On Friday, the *Washington Post* published a credible report by the respected journalist Tom Ricks that the administration has put off the idea of an invasion of Iraq. Indeed, a military attack on Saddam may never happen at all. It seems that the Joint Chiefs of Staff have recommended against a military operation to remove Saddam, on the grounds that it would be difficult and would require some 200,000 troops. They have also recommended against an operation that combined airstrikes with special operations forces on the ground. In fact, they apparently have argued that the continued "containment" of Saddam—the continuation of the Clinton policy, that is—is sufficient.

There are signs that President Bush and his team may be inclined to accept this recommendation. On Thursday, in Berlin, the president said, "I have no war plans on my desk" and "we've got to use all means at our disposal to deal with Saddam Hussein." An official "familiar with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's thinking" told Ricks that "there are many ways in which [regime change] could come about, only one of which is a military campaign in Iraq."

In other words, the administration may be returning to the idea of containment plus covert operations against Saddam—attempted coups, hoped-for assassination by people close to Saddam, hoped-for spontaneous combustion of his dictatorship, hoped-for serious U.N. inspections. In short, dreamland.

This is the policy of the Clinton administration, the one Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, and a host of Republicans criticized so vociferously during the 2000 campaign: Keep Saddam "in his box" and pray for a miracle. That is what Clinton did for eight years. The CIA tried to foment coups, to support plots against Saddam, and they all failed. Plotters were caught and executed. American agents were rounded up and executed. And at the end of Clinton's term, Saddam was alive and kicking.

And posing the grave peril that Bush so astutely identified in his State of the Union address. But now, apparently, the Bush administration may be seeing wisdom in Clinton's approach. In fact, the administration recently made life even easier for Saddam, winning U.N. approval for a significant easing of the sanctions against Iraq. Saddam will now grow richer, and he will have new cash to spend on his weapons programs.

Did President Bush really not understand what he was saying when he pronounced the Bush Doctrine? Did he think an invasion of Iraq would be easy? Was it really a surprise to Bush, Cheney, and Rumsfeld when the Joint Chiefs told them 200,000 troops would be needed to take out Saddam?

Perhaps it was. And there are other, worrying signs of non-seriousness about war in the highest reaches of the Bush administration: An unwillingness to substantially increase the defense budget. A lack of preparation of the American public for the fact that the war on terror is going to get bigger, not smaller. A lack of public (and private, so far as we can tell) diplomacy with respect to our allies. A lack of serious planning with Iraqi opposition groups. A lack of a strategy for how to avoid the trap of renewed U.N. inspections.

We could go on.

Surely the president will step in and save the day. His presidency is on the line. As is the credibility of the United States and the whole security structure—or lack thereof—of the post-9/11 world.

But time is not on the president's side. He has lost considerable momentum in the war against terror and weapons of mass destruction. More drift and indecision would be disastrous. The president returns from Europe this week. He needs to take control of his administration, and remind them, as he said in Berlin on Thursday, that "we're still at war." If we're really at war, let's be serious about doing what we have to do to win it.

—William Kristol and Robert Kagan

the weekly Standard

Arm the Pilots and Profile the Passengers

Consider the terrorist alarms issued by the Bush administration in just the last week (May 18-24). Bush administration officials leaked word of an upsurge in threats. Vice President Dick Cheney said another terrorist attack in the United States is "almost certain." FBI Director Robert Mueller warned a suicide bomber is sure to strike and probably can't be stopped. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld insisted it's inevitable terrorists will obtain weapons of mass destruction. And officials said watch out for small planes that might be used by terrorists.

Now consider Washington's response. In Congress, Democrats are talking about the elevation of Tom Ridge, President Bush's homeland security adviser, to cabinet status. They also want an outside panel, appointed by Congress, to look into intelligence failures prior to September 11. And the White House is interested in splitting the Immigration and Naturalization Service into two separate agencies.

The emergency is now, the threat is real and urgent, and terrorists could strike any time, anywhere. Yet the response is bureaucratic.

Sense a disconnect? The emergency is now, the threat is real and urgent, and terrorists could strike any time, anywhere. Yet the response is backward-looking and bureaucratic. Who actually believes the creation of a cabinet-level Department of Homeland Security would have the slightest effect in thwarting terrorists in the foreseeable future? No one. What's worse, there are two steps the administration refuses to take that would have an immediate impact.

The first is arming pilots. This is such a simple solution to airline hijacking—such a powerful deterrent—that pilots and passengers overwhelmingly agree it should be done as soon as possible. In fact, practically everyone is on board, except the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and the airlines themselves. And their opposition is downright inexplicable.

When TSA director John W. Magaw appeared before a Senate committee last week, he was asked by Republican Sen. George Allen of Virginia whether the arming of pilots would have made a difference in warding off the hijackers who flew planes into the World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11. "Well, it may have," Magaw said. He went on to say things are different now. Cockpit doors are locked and air marshals are on some flights.

But even a clumsy terrorist might succeed at jimmying the lock, and, besides, it's not as if the pilot is going to hide in the cockpit while passengers are being systematically executed. If armed, however, the pilot could take on the terrorist. And realizing this, the terrorist might choose to stay away. Unarmed, however, a pilot is tempted to turn the plane over to the terrorist. Sure, it would be better if he resisted. But why put a pilot in that position when arming him with a handgun could prevent the horrible scenario from occurring in the first place?

Magaw and the airlines have raised a series of silly arguments against arming pilots. Magaw told the Senate committee last week that the pilot should keep his attention on flying the plane, not on fighting a terrorist. Okay, but what about the co-pilot? He could step in, either to take control of the plane or confront the terrorist. Another fear cited by opponents is that a passenger might be hit by a stray bullet. That might happen, but it should be noted that most commercial pilots (70 percent) are military veterans. In any case, they'd be trained anew in firearm use. Opponents also say a bullet might puncture the plane, causing decompression. Boeing has shot down this fear and, besides, bullets effective only at short range could be used.

It's true a marshal on every flight would be a wonderful deterrent. But it would also be extravagantly expensive and would require the hiring of 50,000 to 100,000 marshals. At the moment, there are roughly 1,000 air

marshals available for 35,000 flights a day. And the practice is for marshals to travel in pairs. So even if it were decided to man every plane, it would take months or years before enough marshals were hired, vetted, and trained, leaving most airlines vulnerable in the meantime.

The second step is ethnic profiling. Transportation Secretary Norm Mineta has adamantly refused to allow it at airports or other transit centers. And while his decision may be politically correct and pleasing to Arab-American grievance groups, it defies common sense. Virtually every bit of intelligence about potential hijackings, before and after September 11, has pointed to Arabs as perpetrators. All 19 of the September 11 hijackers were young Arab males.

So why not concentrate on them instead of frisking grandmothers of Norwegian descent? "Scrutinizing Arab air travelers is no different from police departments who regularly narrow their search for criminal suspects on people of a certain race when the witness who reported the crime noted the perpetrator's color of skin," says Marc Levin of the American Freedom Center. And it could even be national rather than ethnic profiling, checking out people from countries with a history of funding or harboring terrorists.

In the absence of official profiling, the task is, in effect, left to passengers. They have the option of demanding a suspicious passenger be escorted from the plane or leaving themselves. Or more likely choosing not to fly at all. We have a famous case of profiling by passengers and flight attendants that worked: Richard Reid, the shoe bomber. Viewing him warily, they grabbed Reid instantly when he tried to light his shoes. Otherwise, the American Airlines flight from Paris to Miami might have gone down in the Atlantic. Security personnel had let Reid on the plane.

Magaw and Mineta don't have to be the final word on arming pilots or profiling passengers. They have a boss—President Bush. On his trip to Europe, Bush has blared one message over and over again: The threat of terrorism is real. Deal with it, he told Europeans. It's good advice that applies here at home as well.

—Fred Barnes, for the Editors

George W. Bush, Man of Mystery

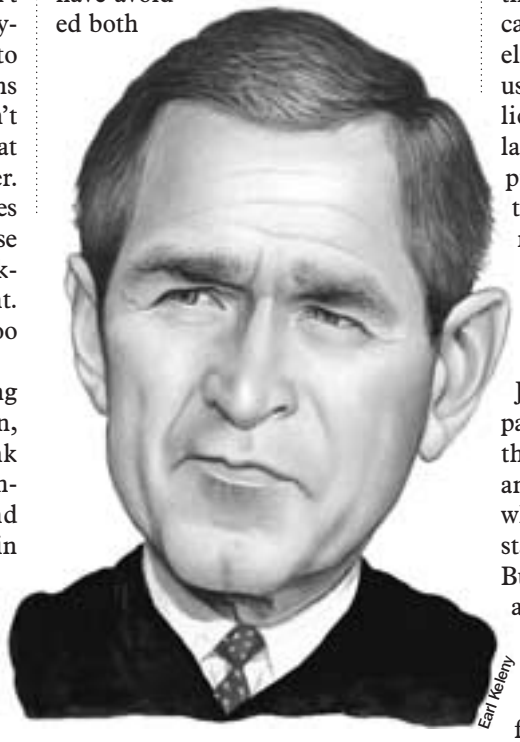
The president has a penchant for secrecy that doesn't serve him well. BY NOEMIE EMERY

PEOPLE AND PRESIDENTS do not come without weaknesses, which differ in nature and kind. Richard M. Nixon's persecution fixation, which surfaced famously in 1962 when he lost the governorship of California to Pat Brown—"you won't have Nixon to kick around anymore"—led in a straight line to Watergate. Bill Clinton's first evasions in the 1992 campaign—"I didn't inhale"—led directly to "sex with that woman" and all that came after. George W. Bush, it seems clear, does not have anything in the class of these problems, but he does have a weakness, which has since become evident. He keeps too many secrets for too long.

We saw this side of Bush during the last week of the 2000 campaign, when his long-ago arrest for drunk driving surfaced just in time to blanket the airwaves on the weekend before Election Day. We saw it again on May 15, when CBS broke the news that the terrorist attacks of September 11 had not come as bolts from the blue. Bush had been shocked, but not as surprised as the rest of us: All summer the government had been buzzing with rumors of mayhem, so much so that a plan for a preemptive strike against al Qaeda had been ready for the president's okay.

The first slip, back during the campaign, did not destroy Bush, but it did feed into a last-minute swoon that permitted Al Gore to tie the election. The second (so far) has not brought down Bush's numbers, but it has led to several nasty days of contention, and a slow drip-drip of revelations in the press. File both these episodes under "wounds, self-inflicted." And wonder what slips may come next.

To all appearances, Bush could have avoided both problems. It would not have been hard for Bush in late 1999 to have folded the arrest story into the redemption saga that became his campaign biography, tucked as a footnote into the chapter of his life that was over, as one of the things overcome. The facts as they were were not all that disastrous (Bush had been with his sister; he was driving too slowly). Likewise, it would not have been difficult to tuck into one of the post-attack speeches a reference to the previous threats. There had been some warnings. He had taken precautions. In the face of a vast flood of non-specified data, he was planning a strike at the source of the problem. Nothing he saw pointed at anything like the September 11 attacks.


Earl Kelly

Discussing these things might have caused some discomfort. But it would have been prudent and right. Bush at times seems fixed upon secrecy, as if that were the whole point of the exercise. But there are some things that one should tell the public, and also something to be gained.

Spring things yourself, and you control the time and setting, and can pick out the things to be emphasized. Cede this to others, and they frame things themselves. Keeping a secret can put you at the mercy of anyone else who might know it, and might use it in turn to hurt you. Enter public life and you assure yourself of a large corps of enemies, with many public and personal reasons to want to see you weakened, among them a number of well-paid professionals—well paid to make you look terrible. It was one of those who leaked Bush's drunk-driving story, at the moment of maximum jeopardy. As Jeff Greenfield writes in his campaign memoir, Bush aides think that this may have lost him both Maine and the popular tally. "Karl Rove, who oversaw the Bush campaign from start to finish, thought the story cost Bush anywhere from half a million to a million votes."

Of the seven presidents preceding Bush, four were crippled by personal failings and were weakened, forced out, or impeached. Bush seems to be far more stable and grounded. The flaws of his predecessors stand as warnings of the failings that the smart and the powerful sometimes fall prey to, as well as the well-known human propensity for shooting oneself in the foot. Damage control may be all very well, but damage prevention is better. A straight line runs from the drunk-driving story to the garish headline, "Bush Knew." If Bush and his aides have their eyes on survival, they will see that the line stops right there. ♦

Noemie Emery is a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

An Irish Party Foresees Its Death

Fine Gael falls—like other center-left parties across Europe. **BY CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL**

LAST WEEK'S IRISH ELECTIONS were supposed to provide a measuring stick for the wave of right-wing xenophobia that commentators warn is sweeping Europe. Spurred by a decade of dynamic growth, the country now has immigrants—tens of thousands of Balkan refugees and African laborers—for the first time in the modern era. And yet the two leading candidates of the newly formed Immigration Control Platform didn't exactly have a banner day, drawing under a thousand votes apiece. If Ireland's xenophobes are exhibiting any comradely dynamism at present, it's only because the entire movement can be assembled in the same living room.

The upshot of Ireland's elections is the same as that of the other three held in Europe in recent weeks, namely that the center left fell to pieces. The slightly rightish Fianna Fáil prime minister Bertie Ahern combined economic growth and a tough crime program to win 81 seats (4 more than last time) in the country's 165-seat lower house. Michael Noonan of Fine Gael, Ireland's limousine-liberal party, kept looking for tiny clouds in the radiant sky of the country's economic expansion, warning that Ireland was heading towards a "culture of selfishness." His party lost 23 of the 54 seats it had held—its worst result in 50 years. The country's most overtly Blairite politician, Ruairi Quinn, saw his Labour party hold its seats, but lose about a fifth of its popular vote.

A rising center-right tide doesn't necessarily lift far-right boats. Take Germany. Heading into this fall's elections, the Bavarian conservative Edmund Stoiber leads Socialist premier Gerhard Schröder by nine points in the polls. And in April's Sachsen-Anhalt state elections, the news got even worse for Schröder. Christian Democrats saw their tally rise from 22 to 37 percent, while the Socialists dropped to just 20 percent, landing as the region's third party. Less noted was that the hard right collapsed, too.

In 1998, the right-wing German People's party (DVU) took 12 percent of the vote in Sachsen-Anhalt. But this year the DVU didn't even field candidates. A new law-and-order party headed by Judge Ronald Schill had high hopes. It had taken 19 percent of a municipal vote in Hamburg—nerve center of the World Trade Center bomb plot—in the first days after September 11. But Schill struggled to pull a mere 4 percent.

A resurgent left that held 13 of 15 European governments in the late 1990s today holds fewer than half of them.

So it may be wise to take the rise of the right in recent Dutch elections as a special case. For one thing, the late rightist candidate Pim Fortuyn made a steady effort to distance himself from the racism of France's Jean-Marie Le Pen. For another, Fortuyn's assassination on May 6 unleashed a huge sympathy vote that may not be reproducible. Regarding the major parties, results in the Netherlands followed the pattern of Ireland, France, and Germany. The center-right Christian Democrats became the country's largest party, increasing their representation by 50 percent, while Prime Minister Wim Kok's Labour/Liberal coalition got its worst result since 1945, losing 37 of its 83 seats.

Just as extraordinary as the late Fortuyn's showing was the disappearance of the economy as an issue. Kok's Labour party has done more than a pretty good job—it has made the Dutch economy the envy of Europe. Real wages have grown by a quarter, and unemployment has fallen to low single digits, under Kok's premiership. (Similarly, Premier Lionel Jospin's solid economic record in France, while not quite as impressive as Kok's, was one for which no American politician would ever have been voted out of office.) A resurgent left that held 13 of 15 European governments in the late 1990s today holds fewer than half of them. So are we witnessing a collapse of the Old World left?

Au contraire. Like a waterfowl diving for fish (a loon, maybe?), the left has been invisible for long enough that one could assume it's drowned. But look carefully and you will see it resurfacing somewhere hundreds of yards away. There—off to the far left. The ex-Communist Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), in its day the most Stalinist party in Eastern Europe, is now Germany's second party in parts of the former East (including Sachsen-Anhalt). And note the way, after its presidential loss, France's Socialist party is rejiggering itself to fight June's legislative elections. Such Clinton-style moderates as the former finance ministers Dominique Strauss-Kahn and Laurent Fabius have been relieved of their leading roles; radicals, such as the former labor minister Martine Aubry, have taken their place. Palestine, not the bond market, is the issue of the day.

In Ireland, the big story is that Fine Gael voters fled to two newer, more radical left parties: the Greens, who now hold 6 parliamentary seats; and the Irish Republican terrorist party,

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Sinn Féin, which went from 1 seat to 5. Imagine: In the wake of September 11, in what has for a decade been the most booming economy in Europe, a terrorist party triples its vote to 6.5 percent.

The fiction persists, of course, that there is no link between the terrorist IRA and its "political wing," Sinn Féin. But the convicted gunrunner Martin Ferris, who defeated a former foreign secretary to win his seat for Sinn Féin, sits on the IRA's Army Council. The link between Gerry Adams and the IRA is the same as that between Yasser Arafat and the Al Aksa martyrs. And Sinn Féin's victory came just weeks after revelations that IRA experts formed the nucleus of a virtual Academy of International Terrorism sponsored by the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces.

The two main tendencies in the left's reconstitution are environmentalism (the Greens) and radical anti-capitalism (Sinn Féin). The latter seems to be gaining the upper hand. In the days after the vote, it was Sinn Féin that called aggressively for a union of the parties of the "broad left," and its initiatives were met with some sympathy. "The real opposition were the Greens and Sinn Féin . . . ," said Green member of the European Parliament Patricia McKenna. "We need to build on our successes now."

One Europe-wide casualty of the latest wave of elections may be the ideological double standard that has been in force for several years. European politicians consider Le Pen an untouchable because his oratory resembles that of Vichy collaborationists. Fair enough. But why is there no stigma attached to voting for the IRA, who a decade ago were eviscerating pedestrians with plastic explosives? Why does public opinion look the other way when German Social Democrats form local coalitions with the ex-Communists?

For years, European *bien-pensants* have cast the hard right as distinct from the center right for purposes of coalition-forming (Jacques Chirac must not only denounce the National Front but repudiate its supporters), but indistinguishable for the purposes of guilt by association (French Socialists march not just against the Italian hard right but against Silvio Berlusconi as well). The hard left, meanwhile, is indistinguishable from the left for purposes of coalition-forming (ex-Communists have helped govern in Paris and still do in Berlin) but distinct for the purposes of guilt by association (Jospin was never asked to repudiate France's powerful Trotskyite vote).

For weeks now, commentators at Britain's *Guardian* and France's *Le Monde* have been dumbstruck at the inability of left parties to "seize the center" of the electorate. It turns out that the European left's problem with centrist voters is that it doesn't particularly want them in the first place. ♦

Michael Ramirez

Democracy in Palestine

End times for Arafat?

BY ELI J. LAKE

MAY 21 WAS A TOUGH DAY for Yasser Arafat. In Ramallah, an opinion poll was released that showed most Palestinians are fed up with his leadership. According to the survey, conducted by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research between May 15 and 18, only 35 percent of the Palestinian people support Arafat; a full 95 percent favor sacking ministers suspected of corruption; and 83 percent favor holding elections in the next few months.

In Washington, meanwhile, a State Department official delivered a blow to Arafat's credibility. Briefing reporters on the department's first annual report on terrorism since September 11, Francis Taylor, the secretary of state's coordinator for counterterrorism, mentioned in passing that the documents Israel captured last month at Arafat's compound in Ramallah are authentic. Arafat and his deputies have insisted they are forgeries.

Two of the documents the Israelis have made public show Arafat's signature authorizing cash disbursements to members of the Al Aksa Martyrs Brigade, a group the State Department designated this year as a foreign terrorist organization. "We don't have any question about the authenticity of the documents provided by the Israeli government," said Taylor. His statement is significant because it can be assumed to reflect the CIA's independent, classified analysis of the seized documents. All in all, Ambassador Taylor's admission reinforces the Israeli government's contention that it had good reasons for attacking Arafat's security apparatus—though Taylor's report, amazingly, was critical of Israel's destruction of Arafat's "security infrastructure."

One Palestinian who is watching Arafat closely is Omar Ibrahim Karsou, a currency trader turned political activist who until recently was based in Ramallah. "I wouldn't want to be in Arafat's shoes right now," he said in Washington last week.

Karsou has just announced the formation of a new organization, Democracy in Palestine, aimed at sparking a democratic challenge to Arafat's rule. In recent months he has met with senior officials at the Pentagon, the National Security Council, and the State Department to discuss the practical prospects for alternative leadership for the Palestinian people, but only recently did he judge the political climate right for a public announcement. "If the Palestinians see there is international pressure," he says, "then there is a good chance of ousting the regime."

Such pressure has started coming from none other than George W. Bush. After meeting with Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon on May 7, the president told reporters, "It's important for all of us to work out a way to develop the institutions necessary for there to be a Palestinian Authority that's got the capacity to keep security, . . . as well as a Palestinian Authority that's got the ability to help promote hope for the future of her people."

Following the president's call for reform, administration officials say the White House instructed the State Department to seek out moderate leaders within the Palestinian Authority who would be willing eventually to negotiate with Israel. "For now, we are all trying to figure out exactly what

Drew Friedman

Yasser Arafat

Eli J. Lake covers the State Department for United Press International.

we mean when we say, 'reform,'" one administration official said last week. "The Israelis want reform to mean regime change, Arafat wants reform to mean nothing. Right now we are in the middle."

Omar Karsou, for his part, warns against the United States' presuming to pick new leaders for the Palestinian people. He sees his own role as that of catalyst for change, he says, not leader in exile. But the fact that Karsou and others are willing to oppose Arafat publicly could crumble the longstanding article of faith in the Bureau of Near East Affairs at the State Department that Arafat is the only viable leader of the Palestinian people and the only person capable of ending the intifada.

Meyrav Wurmser, director of the Hudson Institute's Center for Middle East Studies and one of Karsou's hosts in Washington, said Wednesday, "The fact that people like Omar Karsou are stepping forward shows Arafat's vulnerability. It is a sign of the great deal of frustration that is building among Arafat's people."

Indeed, in one of the most direct challenges to his authority since the creation of the Palestinian Authority, the Palestinian Legislative Council on May 16 called on Arafat to oust his current cabinet within 45 days. Earlier in May, Arafat's trusted adviser and liaison to the Palestinian legislature Nabil Amr resigned. Also in May, Abdul Sattar Qassem, a Palestinian political scientist who in the past has defended suicide bombings, declared his candidacy for president of the authority if Arafat should hold elections.

All of these signs—starting with the change in Palestinian public opinion—appear to vindicate President Bush's policy of pressing Arafat for genuine reform before helping rebuild a Palestinian government or pressing the Israelis to negotiate. The test is whether Bush can keep the pressure on. As Omar Karsou told me last week, "If the world does not relent, neither will the Palestinian people." ♦

Dulce et Decorum Est . . .

. . . pro Canada mori.

BY LIONEL CHETWYND

Getty Images / David McNew

Canadian Consul General Colin Robertson, at the May 15 memorial service in Encino.

Encino, California

THE SKIRL of the bagpipes, the Highland Claymore draped in Black Watch tartan, the men in kilts, all were incongruities in this San Fernando Valley Episcopal Church. May 15 had been clear and warm, the light breeze in the palm trees promising a perfect California night for baseball or barbecue. Perhaps that was why we were fewer than three dozen who gathered that evening to mark the passing of four men personally unknown to any of us. A bored journalist asked why it was important that we mourn the deaths of Sgt. Marc Léger (29), Cpl. Ainsworth Dyer (25), Pvt. Richard A. Green (21), and Pvt. Nathan Smith (27). Because, it was explained, these are the four members of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry killed near Kandahar on April 17, 2002, during a live-fire training exercise when an American F-16 flying overhead thought they were attacking his aircraft. His friendly fire ended their lives. How we acknowledge their deaths will tell us a great deal about ourselves.

"America is not a country; it is a civilization." Thus Alan Gottlieb, Canada's onetime ambassador to the United States, advised his countrymen in a recent article in that country's *National Post*. He added, "a self-absorbed [one]." He is correct on both counts. Europeans sneeringly refer to that self-absorption as "triumphalism" when they're in a

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patronizing mood or "unilateralism" when their growing irrelevance creates panic in the ruling elites. But Canadians know their big brother better, and understand the complexities of his huge empire. They recognize the self-absorption as an unavoidable outcome of being the world's only superpower, the font of virtually all innovation and daring, and the cradle of universal popular culture.

But they do pay close attention to how we wield our preeminence. Even though they wondered why it took us so long to enter both World Wars of the last century, they didn't see it as a moral failing. Meanwhile, they raised the largest (relative to population) armed force in the world for those clashes. Over 15,000 Canadians waded ashore on D-Day—this from a nation of 16,000,000! By the war's end, Canada had the world's third largest navy and fourth largest air force. In Korea, too, Canada's military presence was the largest on a population-ratio basis.

Despite their sacrifices, Canadians didn't feel resentful when our films and television virtually ignored their contributions in those wars. They understood this was the price they paid for being the most Hellenized part of the empire. But it did lay the seeds for Pierre Elliott Trudeau's vision of a Canada that would define itself not by what it was, but by what it wasn't—American. He made a career of tweaking the American nose, embarrassing us from Havana to Beijing. And no more military "adventures." From the day Trudeau became prime minister, in July 1968, Canada's armed forces were the centerpiece of U.N. peacekeeping. That this was generally the realm of third world countries was, it seemed, less painful than playing the traditional role of America's solid ally.

But all that ended on September 11. More than any other people in the world—the Brits included—Canadians rallied to the cause. Perhaps not their media elites and chattering classes (another example of our similarity) but certainly the *people*. And for the first time in over half a century, the pre-Trudeau Canada awoke from its long sleep. Not since the signing at Panmunjom had Canadian soldiers gone into battle. It was a huge moment in Canada's life and one of great importance in ours—if only because homeland security is impossible without a friendly and committed Canada. In changing a half century of military doctrine, Jean Chrétien's ruling Liberals risked considerable political capital. But once the decision was made, the vast majority of Canadians embraced it as standing by the family in time of need. They understood the danger. So when four "sons of the Maple Leaf" fell in battle, it was not unexpected; nor was the cause of their loss—friendly fire—a shock. Canadians understood the price of standing up to evil.

What has stunned them, however, is our reaction. Not the official government-to-government noises, which have been appropriate, but *our* reaction—the feelings of the American people and the coverage of our media. Where were the newspaper editorials? Where were the "In-Focus" segments on Rather, Jennings, and Brokaw? Were the only telegenic funerals those orchestrated in Ramallah? Was the sparsely attended service at St. Nicholas Episcopal Church in the San Fernando Valley the epicenter of American empathy for our allies?

Our neighbors can be forgiven for concluding from the general silence that the easiest way to get the American media to ignore you—or treat you with downright hostility—is to become a close and admiring friend. Ask the Taiwanese. Ask the Israelis.

Last week, Canada announced it will be withdrawing all its troops from Afghanistan by the summer. They are the second largest force in Kandahar and a pivotal part of the combat formations. No doubt they will be missed. So far, no one here seems to have noticed.

This is unacceptable. We are at war. Self-absorption is not an option. We must pay close attention to our allies lest the world become a lonelier place for our cause. ♦

Politics in the Pulpit

Should tax-exempt churches be allowed to endorse candidates? BY TERRY EASTLAND

IT'S WELL KNOWN that tax-exempt organizations aren't supposed to engage in politics. Federal law says they may not "participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements), any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office." The prohibition is absolute: A single endorsement by a tax-exempt entity can result in its loss of tax-exempt status, and may also force it to pay an excise tax.

Walter B. Jones Jr., a Republican congressman from North Carolina, wants to loosen the law so that a certain group of public charities may engage at least to a certain extent in political campaigns, without risk of losing their tax-exempt status. The group includes religious entities only: churches, synagogues, and mosques. The Houses of Worship Political Speech Protection Act is the title of the Jones bill, and in mid-May it got what Jones long had sought: an actual hearing (from a Ways and Means subcommittee). Few observers think it has much chance of becoming law. Yet it raises key issues of church and state.

The law Jones wants to amend wasn't added to the tax code until 1954. From the nation's founding until then, public charities, churches included, could engage in politics as much as they wanted, without fear of legal penalty. And of course our history contains examples of politicking from the pulpit that include what was made illegal in 1954: actual candidate endorsements.

What happened in 1954 was an act of political revenge on the part of Sen. Lyndon Baines Johnson. Reacting to the opposition of Texas nonprofits in his primary, Johnson proposed the language that became law in a floor amendment. It was unanimously approved. There was no debate, and of course no hearings.

Neither of the nonprofits that offended Johnson was a church, nor is there any evidence to suggest that he meant to target churches. Yet the Johnson amendment, reaching all tax-exempt organizations as it did, necessarily applied to "houses of worship."

For many years there was little enforcement of the Johnson amendment against houses of worship. Presumably, there wasn't much to investigate or else the Internal Revenue Service looked the other way. (The IRS is loath to announce its probes, and unless those investigated announce the fact, or there is litigation, cases are unlikely to be made public.) In the past two decades, however, theologically conservative churches have complained about increasing scrutiny under the Johnson amendment, though very few have been penalized. The best-known case involved the Church at Pierce Creek in Binghamton, N.Y., which had its tax-exempt status revoked for sponsoring full-page ads in 1992 that ran in *USA Today* and the *Washington Times*. The ads identified as "sins" abortion on demand, homosexuality, and premarital sex, admonished Christians to oppose such sins, and—what drew the IRS's attention—not to vote for presidential candidate Bill Clinton.

Jones and his allies cite the Church at Pierce Creek case in charging unequal treatment: They say the IRS is more interested in policing churches identified with Republican causes and candidates than liberal churches, especially those in black communities that invite Democrats into their pulpits. An investigation two years ago by the Joint Committee on Taxation found no credible evidence of political motivation on the part of the IRS. Even so, as testimony on the Jones bill made clear, the service relies on complaints from citizens to enforce the Johnson amendment, and it appears that the complaints it receives come almost exclusively from the left.

Americans United for Separation of Church and State has been particularly aggressive both in warning churches about the Johnson amendment and in reporting those it believes are violating it. Barry Lynn of Americans United says the group warns churches of all descriptions, not just conservative ones. Jones thinks Americans United, given its views, is more energetic when it comes to policing the right-leaning churches. But perhaps the most important point here is that there is no similar watchdog on the right—no organization identified with conservative causes that is sending out letters about the Johnson amendment. Why that is so is itself interesting: The secular and religious left tends to be content with the Johnson amendment, while religious conservatives tend not to be.

The practical argument advanced by supporters of the Jones bill is one of legalization: There already is a good bit of political activity going on, in churches of all kinds, and while some of it involves actual endorsements, most of it doesn't, and the parts that don't nonetheless may draw IRS scrutiny because the service in assessing political activity weighs "facts and circumstances"—a loose standard that permits too much discretion. For example, the IRS may decide that the preparation and distribution of voter guides constitutes prohibited "political intervention" unless they address a "wide variety" of issues—as the service defines "wide." The IRS's approach creates anxiety and uncertainty for the churches—

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and that, say the bill's supporters, needs to change.

If the Senate of 1954 could be reconvened and asked—as it was not at the time—whether "houses of worship" should be prohibited from engaging in politics, it might have been forced to consider whether it wanted to deny what churches had been free to do for better than a century and a half. Certainly there is nothing in the Constitution that requires churches to refrain from such engagement. There are prudential and, from the perspective of the churches themselves, theological reasons they may not wish to be involved in politics—the Southern Baptist Convention, while supporting the Jones bill, encourages Baptist churches to speak freely on issues but to refrain from endorsing candidates—but the Constitution leaves it to churches to decide that. Unless, of course, there is some basis by which the state may regulate what would otherwise be untouchable First Amendment rights. According to the courts, the fact of tax-exempt status provides such a basis.

In the full sweep of American history, the Jones bill actually contemplates a moderate result, since it would permit campaign involvement on the part of a church, not absolutely, as was the case before 1954, but only so long as it was "no substantial part" of its activities. That language comes from a provision in the code that limits how much "lobbying" or legislative activity a church may conduct. As that term has been interpreted, a church that devotes more than 5 percent of its time, money, and personnel to lobbying has crossed the line from insubstantial to substantial. The Jones bill thus would relax the absolute ban on political activity. Which is to say: There would be a qualified prohibition.

This fact undercuts the rhetoric used by supporters of the Jones bill—that it would "restore the rights of religious organizations," as though it would take us back to the pre-1954 good old days. Yet even this qualified prohibition is too much for the secular and religious left to abide. Most of their contentions are overblown, but there is a serious issue that Barry Lynn of Americans United has raised. Lynn argues that the qualified prohibition wouldn't pass muster under the Supreme Court's 1989 ruling in *Texas Monthly* v. *Bullock*. He is making that case to derail the Jones bill. But he could be right.

Like many other states, Texas had a law that exempted religious publications from sales taxes. *Texas Monthly*, which was not entitled to the exemption because of its secular nature, challenged the law. The Supreme Court, by a vote of 6 to 3, held that it violated the First Amendment's ban on establishing religion. In the opinion for the Court, Justice William Brennan said the exemption unconstitutionally favored religious over non-religious groups. In this Brennan tracked the understanding of the First Amendment first advanced by the Court in a landmark 1947 case, in which Justice Hugo Black declared that the First Amendment denied government the power to "aid all religions"—and thus to privilege religion over non-religion.

Black's insistence on absolute neutrality has proved controversial (to put it mildly), and some justices and some Court majorities have not agreed with it. Still, while the composition of the Court has changed since *Texas Monthly*, five justices (including Sandra Day O'Connor) are likely to favor it—and thus to find a problem with a houses-of-worship-only approach.

Whether the Jones bill is passed—the House leadership would have to get behind it to get it to the floor—and whatever its fate might be in the courts, houses of worship certainly may engage in forbidden politicking even now. They just have to be willing to pay taxes, should the IRS look their way. ♦

Uncle Sam's Makeover

The State Department's answer to Osama bin Laden is to "redefine America."

By Stephen F. Hayes

Shortly after her confirmation as the State Department's top communications whiz last October, Charlotte Beers said she hoped to create among the world's one billion Muslims an "understanding that they don't need to kill us to get our attention."

To accomplish that patronizing goal, Beers and her State Department colleagues have undertaken a "public diplomacy" campaign in the Muslim world. The effort will naturally require unceasing "dialogue" and involve lots of "listening." There will be pamphlets, CD-ROMs, public service announcements, a State Department magazine for young Muslim males. There will be trips, student and professional exchanges, focus groups, and polls. There will be English teachers, "focused and augmented activities," and even "American corners"—multimedia rooms in "partnering institutions in target countries" to "bring an American environment to key audiences."

Some of the funds for these myriad projects come from a $15 million "Emergency Supplemental for public diplomacy." Another $17.5 million comes from the "Emergency Response Fund." Still more will be drawn from the nearly $600 million in public diplomacy funding for 2003.

Beers, a top Madison Avenue advertising executive handpicked by Colin Powell to serve as undersecretary of state for public diplomacy and public affairs, summed up her task in an interview last fall with the *Wall Street Journal*. "It is almost as though we have to redefine what America is," she said. "This is the most sophisticated brand assignment I have ever had."

All of this—emergency spending, redefining America, and the rest of it—comes as a direct response to the September 11 attacks. And it demonstrates with remarkable clarity that one sure way to get our attention is to kill us.

Stephen F. Hayes is a staff writer at The Weekly Standard.

Of course, any time terrorists murder nearly 3,000 civilians, it'll get the attention of the United States government. President Bush's response—we will hunt down and kill those who wish to harm us—avoided the namby-pamby, blame-America-first suggestion that somehow we brought the attacks on ourselves. For almost nine months, the administration, with some minor exceptions, has responded to September 11 with a strong message: We will punish our enemies and help our friends.

But the Beers effort confuses, perhaps even undermines, that core message. And it does so largely because of its failure to distinguish between good Muslims and bad. For implicit in the Beers construct is the notion that our dialogue will include even the distinct minority of Muslims who wish to do us harm.

As Beers recently told a gathering at a Washington think tank: "There's never been a time when a key group from the Islamic world has asked to see me—that I know of—that we've ever said anything but please come, we need to learn, we need to listen."

Charlotte Beers is listening, but she's listening to the wrong people.

Nihad Awad, for example. A Palestinian-American, Awad has repeatedly embraced Hamas, the Saudi-funded, Palestinian terrorist organization that has claimed responsibility for many of the recent bombings in Israel. In a 1994 appearance at Barry University in Florida, Awad declared: "I am in support of the Hamas movement." That same year, when Mike Wallace of *60 Minutes* asked Awad if he supports the "military undertakings of Hamas," Awad told him, "The United Nations Charter grants people who are under occupation to defend themselves against illegal occupation." Former FBI counterterrorism chief Oliver "Buck" Revell has called Awad's former employer, the Islamic Association For Palestine, "a front organization for Hamas that

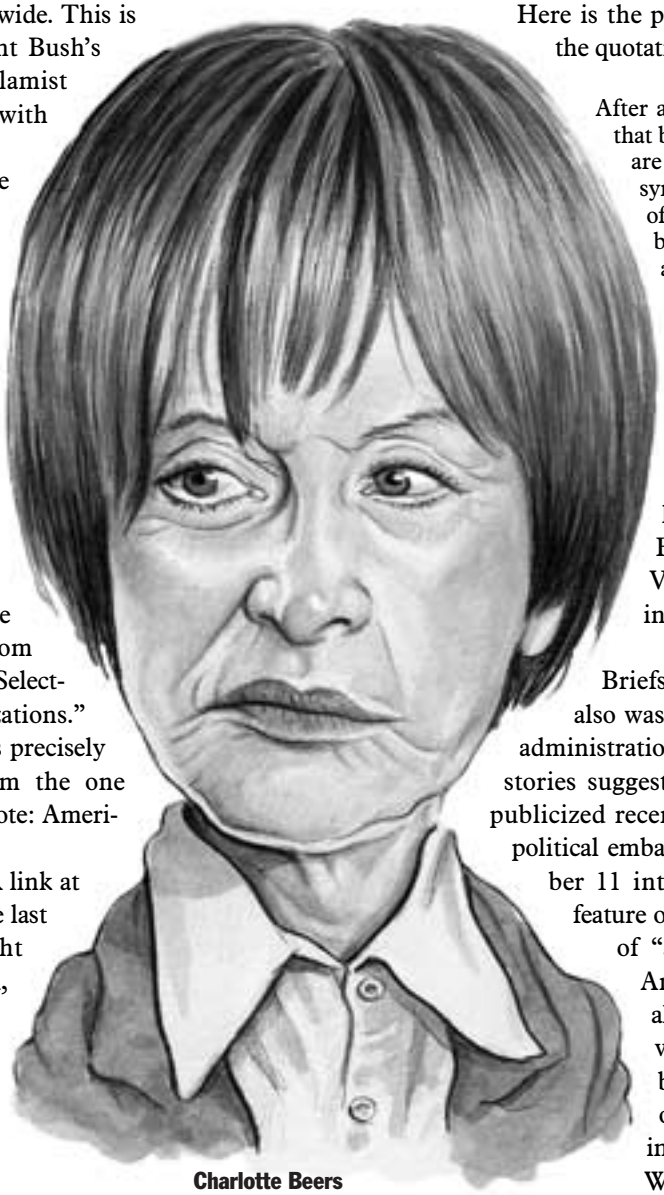
engages in propaganda for Islamic militants." And just five days before the September 11 attacks, when the FBI shut down Texas-based computer firm InfoCom citing its terrorist ties, Awad blamed the raid on the Bush administration's efforts to appease "Israel, a racist country and state."

Strange, then, that Nihad Awad—along with the group he heads, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)—is prominently featured in the State Department's much-ballyhooed effort to win the "hearts and minds" of Muslims worldwide. This is especially odd given President Bush's clear warning to would-be Islamist sympathizers: You are either with us or with the terrorists.

The centerpiece of the State Department's campaign thus far is called "Muslim Life in America," and it marks a rather dramatic shift in the nature of U.S. public diplomacy. The concept is simple and, at first blush, benign: Persuade the audience that America loves Muslims, then hope that Muslims will love America back.

But visitors to the "Muslim Life in America" website are just one click away from CAIR's website, listed under "Selected Nongovernmental Organizations." And CAIR's site gives visitors precisely the opposite impression from the one Charlotte Beers wants to promote: America doesn't like Muslims at all.

If you clicked on the CAIR link at the State Department's website last week, for example, you might have been surprised to read, over the lead story, this headline: "First Lady Says She Can't Empathize with Palestinian Mothers." Here is that story, in its entirety, as posted by CAIR:



Charlotte Beers

Illustration By Drew Friedman

> In her inaugural foray into the substance of international diplomacy, first lady Laura Bush turned her teaching experience to the problem of terrorism and young Palestinian suicide bombers, telling a Paris audience Tuesday that education can transform hate to hope. "It's so easy to empathize with families in Israel and around the world who literally would be afraid to send their children to the grocery store or the bowling alley" for fear of suicide bombers, she said. Asked if she had empathy for the other side in the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, she answered with reflexive bluntness: "Can I empathize with a mother who sends her child out to kill herself and others? No . . . "

Mrs. Bush was exactly right, of course, on the substance of the question. But the story CAIR told isn't the whole story. It is an excerpt from a much longer Associated Press story that leaves readers with quite the opposite impression from the one CAIR sought to create. Here is the paragraph directly following the quotation from Mrs. Bush:

> After a beat, she continued to say that both Israelis and Palestinians are dying. "You have to have sympathy for both sides and all of us in the world need to urge both of them—both Palestinians and Israelis—to try to stop the violence and come to the table."

CAIR changed the story's headline, too. The original could have been written by Charlotte Beers herself: "The First Lady Embraces the Teaching of Values as an Answer in Turning Hate to Hope."

The same day, the "News Briefs" section on the CAIR site also was highly critical of the Bush administration. It posted excerpts of two stories suggesting the White House had publicized recent terror threats to counter political embarrassment over pre-September 11 intelligence lapses. A regular feature of the site is a running count of "anti-Muslim incidents" in America since September 11, along with an easy-to-use survey for individuals who believe they've been victims of racial or religious profiling in airports.

When President Bush shut down a Texas foundation last December, citing a decade-long FBI investigation that turned up close ties to Hamas, CAIR once again ripped the administration. CAIR warned that closing the foundation was an "unjust and counterproductive move [that] can only damage America's credibility with Muslims in this country and around the world and could create the impression that

there has been a shift from a war on terrorism to an attack on Islam." Several other radical Islamic groups that are given a platform in State Department literature expounded similar views.

While no one disputes the right of CAIR and fellow extremists to voice their opinions, including their support for Hamas, some administration officials and many moderate Muslims question the wisdom of associating the U.S. government with their views. Doesn't using these groups in high-profile government outreach efforts run the risk of seeming to give them "a seal of approval"?

"Why would the State Department conduct outreach to the Wahhabi lobby?" says an administration source familiar with the effort, citing the radical strain of Islam funded and promoted by Saudi Arabia. "There are good Muslims and there are bad Muslims. We have to make these important distinctions and broadcast them to the world."

"Who gets to represent the American Muslim voice is a very sensitive issue," says Ali Asani, a professor of Indo-Muslim language and culture at Harvard. Asani believes CAIR and other "right-wing Muslim groups" have elbowed their way into the public debate because they are outspoken and politically connected. For that reason, Asani says, he "could imagine that someone in the State Department would be saying, 'Who do we talk to?' and call CAIR."

Charlotte Beers did call CAIR. According to a press release from the group, she asked for and received a "meeting to open a dialogue with Muslims on issues related to how America is perceived in other countries, particularly those with Muslim majority populations."

If Beers is developing her pro-America propaganda message by relying on groups that defend terrorism and sharply criticize life in the United States, why would anyone have confidence that she will show better judgment when it comes to communicating that message overseas?

While Beers has many detractors in the administration—even in the State Department—no one doubts that she has the full confidence of Colin Powell. The pair became acquainted while serving on the all-star board of directors of Gulfstream Aerospace in the mid-1990s. Beers, 66, had run two of the world's largest advertising agencies, Ogilvy and Mather and J. Walter Thompson. The Texas native has a well-earned reputation for being blunt, even a bit sassy. Over the course of her long career, she has persuaded Americans to buy everything from Uncle Ben's rice to Sears tools to Head & Shoulders shampoo. But she is brand new to the world of public diplomacy, and critics say she has a lot to learn. (At a speech earlier this month, for example, Beers repeatedly referred to an "Imam"—a Muslim cleric—as an "Iman"—like the model.)

Before he had announced his recruitment of her for the Bush administration, Powell seemed to offer a preview of his nomination of Beers when he testified before the House Budget Committee on March 15, 2001. "I'm going to be bringing people into the public diplomacy function of the department who are going to change from just selling us in the old USIA way to really branding foreign policy, branding the department, marketing the department, marketing American values to the world," he said. "And not just putting out pamphlets."

Beers is, in fact, putting out lots of pamphlets. But as Powell predicted, she's doing much more. Administration sources say Beers is an active participant in the White House's daily conference calls held to shape the war message. And, importantly, she has Powell's ear.

Even critics will acknowledge that it's too early for a complete evaluation of the results of Beers's efforts—she's been in the job for only eight months, and everyone concedes the challenge is huge. But starting with the "Muslim Life in America" campaign, the early indications are not promising.

Philip Van Munching, a columnist for the advertising magazine *Brandweek*, argued last fall that the approach was destined to fail. "The problem with using Madison Avenue in the current conflict is that advertising exists to simplify; to boil things down to a basic message, and to find cost-effective ways to communicate that message to a specific target. That's a swell approach when the subject is cola, or soap . . . but it's condescending and short-sighted when it comes to possible global conflict."

There are signs, however, that things may be changing for the better. President Bush, when he met with Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak in March, announced that he had asked Powell "to launch a new initiative aimed at increasing both economic and educational opportunities throughout the region."

And while that directive could mean virtually anything, early reports from inside the State Department suggest that it's a serious and worthwhile effort. The initiative, to be unveiled in July, will offer an American vision of "a better tomorrow in the region," according to a senior State Department official.

Its first stage is a top-down, bottom-up review of all U.S. aid money pouring into the Middle East. Then comes a reallocation of resources designed to tie funds more directly to political and economic liberalization. The money will be focused primarily in three areas: (1) market-

based economic reforms, (2) liberal education as an alternative to the anti-American schools that are increasingly popular in the region, and (3) a reinvigoration of civil society and promotion of the rule of law.

Some of the programs will be roughly based on similar ones that worked in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, such as "enterprise funds" where cash follows directly to successful reform efforts.

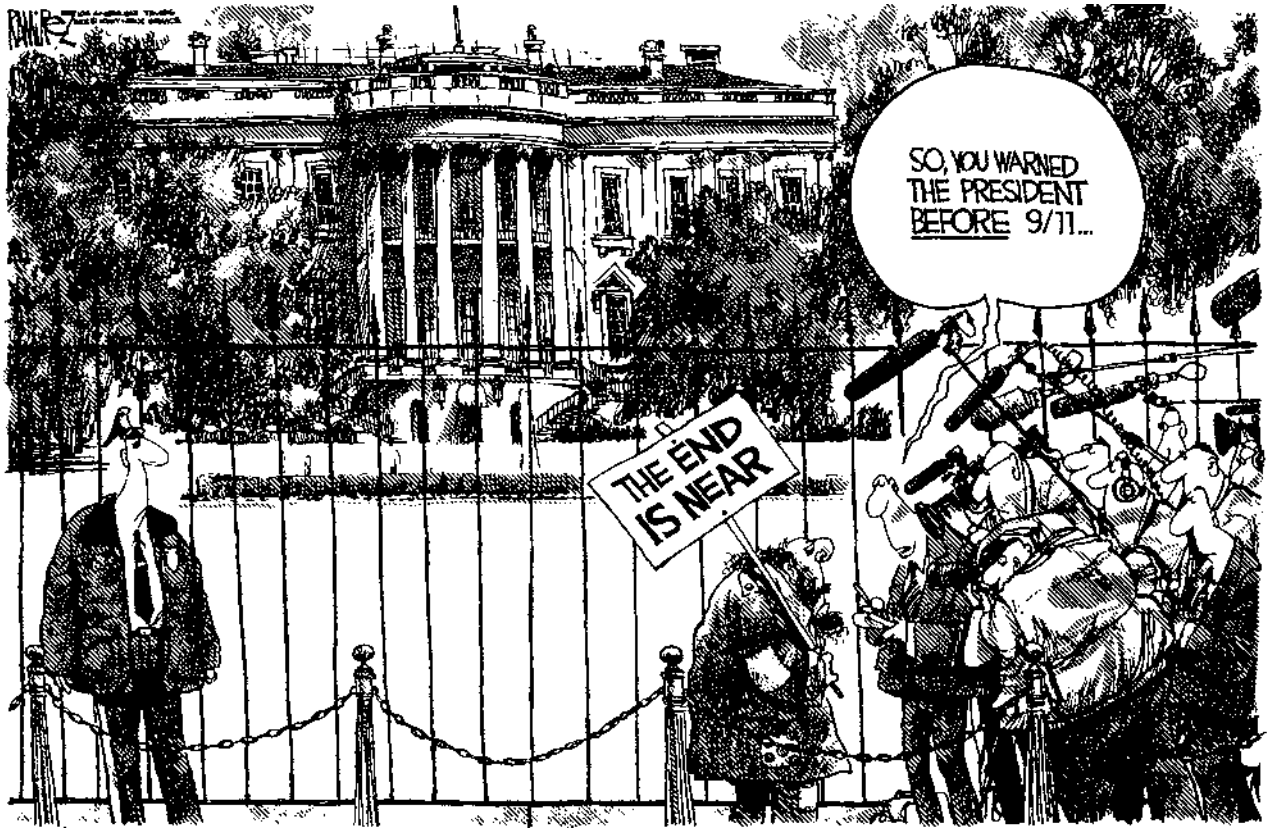
"There are two parts of our message to the Arab world," says the State Department source. "First, we are going to destroy the terrorists. But also, and it's a message that we all have to say very clearly, we believe that open markets and societies will improve lives throughout the region." In short—as the president put it—punish our enemies and help our friends.

The State Department has already had some help in pushing this line. Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz made a similar case earlier this month in a brilliant speech to the World Affairs Council in Monterey, California. Rather than embracing all Muslims, including CAIR types and the radicals they defend, Wolfowitz framed the battle as pitting the United States and moderate Muslims against the Islamists—a crucial distinction. "We must speak to the hundreds of millions of moderate and tolerant people in the Muslim world, regardless of where they live, who aspire to enjoy the blessings of freedom and democracy and free enterprise."

He pointed to several recent examples of that budding alliance. "In the last decade, the men and women of America's Armed Forces have gone into harm's way to defend people against aggression or war-induced famine. . . . As it happens, in each one of those cases—whether it was Kuwaitis, or Iraqi Kurds, or Somalis, or Bosnians, or Kosovars, or most recently Afghanis—the people we were defending were predominantly Muslim. And we helped them not because they are Muslims, but because they are human beings."

Wolfowitz highlighted countries like Turkey and Indonesia as evidence that Islam is compatible with markets and democracy. He also promised that the Bush administration would continue reaching out beyond governments to moderate Muslim individuals—who, he said, "are the real focal point of liberal democracy and the true engines of change."

There is no guarantee that the push for liberalization in the Islamic world will work. After all, there are reasons that it has never been tried in earnest before now. But if that campaign has the effect of crowding out Charlotte Beers's misbegotten effort to "redefine America," it will have succeeded in an important way. ♦



Michael Ramirez

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Are the Jesuits Catholic?

By Paul Shaughnessy

St. Ignatius Loyola. Hulton / Archive.

"My dear fellow, we all see the difficulties that beset any notion of a revealed religion," says an Oxford philosopher in Ronald Knox's *Let Dons Delight*. "You draw a blank check, as it were, by assenting beforehand to its doctrines, not knowing whether there will be enough assets to meet it when you come to look into your account."

The Catholic Church understands herself as the legatee of universal and immutable truths about God and man, claiming a divine guarantee that she never has taught, and never will teach, error. As a Basque soldier named Ignatius Loyola came to realize with particular clarity, this position is either true or insane: Only moral cowardice or intellectual muddle could make room for a middle ground. Hence no faith is more radically vulnerable than Catholicism to the shortfall intimated by Knox's skeptical don, no religion more in need of a nimble, adaptable, and ever vigilant defense.

Loyola's companions, given the sarcastic name "Jesuits" by their opponents, organized themselves on military lines with a military love for a clear chain of command, as their founding document attests. The Jesuit is to "serve as a soldier of God beneath the banner of the Cross, and to serve the Lord alone and the Church, his spouse, under the Roman pontiff, the vicar of Christ on earth." The Jesuit's mission is "to strive especially for the defense and propagation of the faith and for the progress of souls in Christian life and doctrine."

Passionate Uncertainty
Inside the American Jesuits
by Peter McDonough and Eugene C. Bianchi
University of California Press, 380 pp., $29.95

It's a risky business. The blood-curdling vows by which the Jesuit binds himself perpetually to poverty, chastity, and obedience are typically made for the first time when the novice is twenty or twenty-five years old—not at the conclusion but at the outset of the ten years of training in which he will learn what precisely he has committed himself to defend. The more intelligent and idealistic the aspirant, the more spiritually precarious his position, as he comes to grips with the full power of the Church's adversaries and the all-too-human frailty of her defenders. Loyola's gamble was that, if a man's own desire for God could be made present to him, he would willingly endure the required sacrifices until he saw the truth "from inside," and was motivated no longer by discipline but by love. For four centuries the gamble worked.

No more. The recently published *Passionate Uncertainty: Inside the American Jesuits* is a quirky yet convincing depiction of the collapse of the renegade Society of Jesus: papists who hate the pope, evangelists who have lost the faith. Deprived of their reason for existence as Jesuits, they respond either by putting an end to their existence as

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Jesuits (deserters outnumber active members in the United States) or by indulging a willed imbecility in which the explosively divisive questions are never permitted to surface.

The authors of *Passionate Uncertainty*, Peter McDonough and Eugene Bianchi (a political scientist and professor of religion, respectively), portray the Jesuit crack-up most vividly by quotation from the interviews and written statements they took from more than four hundred Jesuits and former Jesuits. Both the spectrum of the speakers presented and the content of their opinions accurately reflect the current situation. Not that the speakers themselves are always balanced, fair, or magnanimous—the resentments run too deep for that—but taken as a whole the voices give us a true picture of the quandary of America's Jesuits: able yet aimless men, hopelessly compromised by perjury.

The trajectory of the decline is not hard to trace, and the Jesuit story, though more dramatic, differs little from that of other progressive religious orders in the decades following the Second Vatican Council. Liberalism had been seen to foster tolerance and mutual respect in pluralist secular communities. Yet, being purely negative in content and procedural in application, it proved lethal when imported into an intentional association like the Society of Jesus, one both doctrinally exclusivist and rigidly hierarchical. Almost overnight the pope's light infantry became a battalion in which every man decided for himself which war he was fighting. The result was an institutional nightmare: confusion and cowardice at the top; despair, rage, and disillusionment in the ranks. American Jesuits went from 8,400 members in 1965 to 3,500 today. Entering novices declined from a peak one-year total of 409 to a low of 38. Worse, the number of priests who jump ship each year roughly equals the number of entering novices; the number of Jesuits who die annually is twice as high as either.

Yet at its heart, the crisis is not one of size but of allegiance. One of the signal services performed by *Passionate Uncertainty* is that it lets us hear influential Jesuits—those who shape policy—speak their minds frankly, in words unsoftened by the public relations personnel in the fund-raising offices. "I am appalled by the direction of the present papacy," says a university administrator. "I am scandalized by Rome's intransigent refusal to reexamine its doctrines regarding gender and sex. . . . Frankly I think the church is being governed by thugs." "The


Hulton / Archive

church as we have known it is dying," a retreat master insists. "I hope and pray that the Society will help to facilitate this death and resurrection." An academic gloats, "The Society has not sold its soul to the 'Restoration' of John Paul II." Another Jesuit scholar, a church historian, ranks John Paul II as "probably the worst pope of all times"—adding, "He's not one of the worst popes; he's *the* worst. Don't misquote me." The respondents make it clear that their contempt for the pope is based almost entirely on his intransigence, his unwillingness to imitate their own adaptability in the matter of doctrine.

As do all priests, the speakers above took a solemn oath swearing that they "firmly embrace and accept all and everything concerning the doctrine of faith and morals" proposed by the Church. It must not be assumed that they fail to see the discrepancy. Their willed imbecility derives not from a lack of brainpower or ingenuity but from a deliberate decision to ignore the clash of commitments and to suppress insurgent attempts to throw light on what, for tactical reasons, is better left in darkness.

This "plausible deniability" is the motto of the new Jesuit *nomenklatura*, and the men who made themselves superiors in the 1970s understood clearly that you can write or say pretty much anything you want, provided you keep open your semantic lines of retreat. Thus the German theologian Karl Rahner was able to exhort his fellow Jesuits: "You must remain loyal to the papacy in theology and in practice, because that is part of your heritage to a special degree, but because the actual form of the papacy remains subject, in the future too, to an historical process of change, your theology and ecclesiastical law has above all to serve the papacy as it will be in the future." See the move? Our current Jesuits are all loyal to the papacy, but to the *future* papacy—that of Pope Chelsea XII, perhaps—and their support for contraception, gay sex, and divorce proceeds from humble obedience to this conveniently protean pontiff.

There was a price to pay, of course. Plausible deniability allowed the Society of Jesus to emancipate itself from the Holy See, but in the same stroke robbed Jesuit leadership of its ability to lead, to articulate a lucid vision, and to give unambiguous marching orders. Not surprisingly, in the absence of a clear objective, the discipline traditionally accepted as a means to the objective begins to chafe. As the authors

David Lees / CORBIS

Above: Portrait of a Jesuit and His Family *by Marco Benefial (1684-1764). Opposite: A Jesuit missionary in Asia c. 1791.*

explain in their own jargon: "The incentive structure of sainthood has changed. Ascetical practice has undergone demystification and has taken on more than a whiff of the pathological." The result, quite simply, is widespread infidelity to the vows: slackening in poverty and obedience, but, most dramatically, failure in chastity.

In *Passionate Uncertainty* McDonough and Bianchi cite one Jesuit in his fifties who—admitting to bafflement over the question "what constitutes adherence to celibacy?"—says that this uncertainty "puts priests in a damned if you do (no coherent moral posture) and damned if you don't (old-fashioned repression) dilemma." His further remarks suggest that repression is the road less taken: "Now everybody (with brains) realizes that the rules have changed. Can I work closely with a woman colleague? Go to lunch? . . . Can I kiss her good-night? Spend a night once in a while, as long as it does not interfere with my priestly role? Vacation together?"

Though I align myself with the brainless in this man's typology, I have no doubt that he is right to believe that most of his Jesuit colleagues are of his thinking, and that they live not by their vows but by their own new rules. His account is misleading, however, in suggesting that most of the new breed seek the companionship of women.

"I entered as a way to cope with being gay," says a thirty-six-year-old Jesuit, "although that would not have been the way I put it then." He is not alone. Roughly half of the Society under the age of fifty shuffles on the borderline between declared and undeclared gayness. In 1999 the American Jesuits decided to give priority to the recruitment of gays (under the rubric of "men comfortable with their sexuality"), and the majority of American *formatores*, Jesuits in charge of training, are homosexual as well.

There is a good deal of dissembling among superiors here: some denying the accusation of the gay influx, some admitting it but insisting that it is a boon, most perhaps shifting from one stance to the other depending on the sympathies of their audience and the exigencies of the moment. Overall, superiors have cautiously abetted the transformation of the gay subculture into the dominant culture within Jesuit houses. The website of the California Province portrays its novitiate in frankly camp terms (a photo showing two novices in Mardi Gras masks was captioned "Pretty Boy and Jabba the Slut"). On the other coast, *Boston Magazine* recognized the downtown Jesuit parish as the "best place to meet a mate—gay" in its "Best of Boston" awards.

The cost is not negligible. As Neuhaus's Law (propounded by *First Things* editor Richard John Neuhaus) has it, "where orthodoxy is optional, it will sooner or later be proscribed." In the Society of Jesus, this applies to diversity of lifestyle as well as of doctrine. One man observes: "Several of my former Jesuit friends would mention the large number of gay Jesuits and the impact that had on community life as being a big reason they left. As a relatively young Jesuit who is heterosexual, I believe I am in the minority, and that raises questions." A thirty-five-year-old Jesuit adds: "My novice master left to marry, my formation director left for a relationship with another man, et cetera. One cannot help but get the sense that we of this generation of Jesuits may be the 'last of the Shakers.'"

It would be an exaggeration to say there is no concern among superiors at what *Passionate Uncertainty* calls—in a memorable phrase—"the gaying and the graying of the Jesuits." But quite clearly they are willing to tolerate the graying in order to expedite the gaying. The pro-homosexual sympathies of men placed in the gatekeeping positions make it especially difficult for heterosexual—and doctrinally orthodox—candidates to survive the selection process. Men of the type regarded as choice Jesuit material in the 1950s are frequently weeded out before they enter the novitiate. Some years ago an

undergraduate at Harvard told me, "From my reading of history I had this idea of Jesuits as bright, kick-ass guys who love the Church. So I thought I'd check them out, and went to talk to the vocation promoter. In the whole hour we spoke he never once asked me about my prayer life or anything like that. He just stared at my crotch and kept after me about how often I masturbated. So long to that." So long to you, my friend, and hello to Jabba the Slut.

Given their areas of scholarly interest, it is surprising that McDonough and Bianchi fail in *Passionate Uncertainty* to touch on the single most important post-conciliar change in the command structure of American Jesuits: the shift of *de facto* power from the formal hierarchy (rectors, provincials) to university presidents. On paper, the presidents remain subject to their religious superiors; in reality the presidents set the tone by which Jesuit life is lived and, on the occasions of a conflict between presidents and superiors, the presidents win hands-down. The fate of Father Joseph Fessio, a former student of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger and director of Ignatius Press in San Francisco, is a good illustration. When Fessio made himself a nuisance to University of San Francisco president Father Stephen Privett earlier this year by assisting in the founding of a two-year Catholic college in the vicinity, he was promptly reassigned as a chaplain at a tiny hospital in Duarte, California. Few Jesuits were surprised; none failed to get the message.

The social typology of the new leadership class is also an important dimension of the current reality. Prestigious positions, like university and theologate administrators, are filled for the most part from a group informally known as the "Gallery Owners": discreet, well-spoken, well-dressed gay priests in their fifties and early sixties. Where the older Jesuits are notable for the heat of their anti-papal passion, the Gallery Owners display a nearly complete apathy toward religion in all its forms. Conventionally liberal, they support condoms and women priests less as a matter of faith than a fashion statement—rather like wearing a baseball cap backwards. Last year eleven of the twenty-seven American Jesuit universities hosted productions of Eve Ensler's *The Vagina Monologues*, while more humbly employed Jesuits, often inclined to puzzlement at these developments, were officially assured by headquarters that "the Catholic identity of [Jesuit] colleges and universities has never been stronger." The teachings of the Church, being largely an

Early Jesuit thinkers Lessius and Molina. Hulton / Archive.

irrelevance, has minimal importance in shaping the opinions of the Gallery Owners, who tend to regard orthodox Catholicism—like boxing or heterosexuality—as one of the coarse amusements of the working class.

One early reviewer of *Passionate Uncertainty* (himself a member of the Jesuit *nomenklatura*) glanced briefly at the indicators of decline given by McDonough and Bianchi—but concluded cheerfully, "The overall portrait is one of men content in their vocations, who have drawn closer to the person of Jesus while leaving an earlier Almighty God figure behind."

This remark, paradoxical though it seems, is a deft expression of the characteristic disconnection between Jesuit identity (in the new mode) and priestly service of God (in the old). In McDonough and Bianchi's chapter on "Ministry and the Meaning of Priesthood," we hear another man languidly dismiss the notion of sacerdotal duty as an instance of emotional immaturity: "Formal sacramental action is less central, as are religious 'practices,' than they had been in earlier years—but frequently much more engaging. To celebrate daily Mass, simply because it's there or expected, is no longer part of my way of thinking. It would be like an every-night-is-sex approach to a marital relationship."

"None of the men I know cares about being a priest," reports a man in charge of theological training. "What matters is being a Jesuit." A spiritual director in his fifties concurs, "If I could remain a Jesuit while joining the Quakers, I could be tempted." It should not be imagined that these are the voices of passed-over malcontents; on the contrary, this is fast-track Jesuit *chic*. In the *New York Times*, Maureen Dowd wrote of a television drama in which a "hip, glib, cute young priest" drives his penitent to get an abortion: "I didn't think the show reflected the point of view of the entertainment elite or, as some critics have ranted, of its 'non-practicing' Jewish producers. I recognized the point of view of the Jesuit elite. Jesuits are the flyboys of the church, the teaching intelligentsia most likely to be found drinking pricey wine and traveling abroad and devising interpretations of church dogma." As it turns out, she was right: The co-creator of the program and one of the paid consultants were Jesuits—Jesuits, we may surmise, who have successfully left an Almighty God figure behind.

Obviously such forward-thinking men neither have nor wish any part of the retrograde religious world of the

Jesuit saints and martyrs. Edmund Campion, Jean de Brebeuf, Miguel Pro, and their company all died for convictions the new breed finds adolescent and embarrassing. Of course, among the 3,500 American Jesuits there are a few recusants: men who are not interested in joining the Quakers, who still feel bound by their vows, who celebrate Mass, who wish, in their unimaginative way, some kinship with the simplicity and zeal of St. Ignatius Loyola. They tend to speak little and write less: keeping their heads down, for the most part, and carrying bedpans when they don't.

So, if the situation in the Society of Jesus is really as McDonough and Bianchi describe it in *Passionate Uncertainty*, why doesn't the pope intervene and make radical changes? Two reasons suggest themselves. On the one hand, the attitude of Pope John Paul II towards religious congregations, female as well as male, is somewhat Darwinian. He is content to let the healthy groups prosper—Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity are a parade example—while letting the unhealthy ones die out of their own accord, like sick caribou amid the permafrost. On the other hand, recent popes have judged the political cost of intervening to reform failing congregations as excessive in view of the likely benefits to be gained. A close analogy can be drawn with the moles that surfaced in the British Secret Service in the 1950s. Their treachery was known long before action was taken against them; bit by bit they were denied access to sensitive material, simply so that they'd have less to betray. In the same way, and for the same reasons, the popes have declined a dramatic showdown with the new Jesuits, preferring instead, without calling attention to the fact, to give the really important business to more dependable agents.

"As I get older, I find myself less church centered," says a senior academic. The hero of McDonough and Bianchi's story, the passionately uncertain Jesuit, like a man separated from a wife of thirty years, preserves an icy courtesy in referring to his spouse and fulfills the bare minimum of social duties. He may be convinced that he has arrived at the best possible truce given his rocky personal history; but no young man—at least no young man with real options—chooses to give his life to a truce. It is a lonely senescence. Here and there are rumors of courage, devotion, even faith. But the passionately uncertain Jesuit finds himself enclosed in a small corner of a small world, with the waning consolations of sodomy and single-malt whiskey, tottering down the corridors of an increasingly ominous twilight. ♦

Horse Opera

Randolph Scott and the art of the western.

BY TERRY TEACHOUT

If you long to meet odd people, it's hard to top Manhattanites who go to movies on weekdays. To be sure, I am among their number, but at least I have an excuse: I *write* about movies. The viewers I have in mind are the pure-hearted obsessives, overwhelmingly male and uniformly unattractive, who flock to revival houses on sunny spring afternoons to take in the latest week-long tribute to Alexandr Dovzhenko, Ida Lupino, or Edgar G. Ulmer—it scarcely matters, since the same folks show up every time, no matter what's showing.

Rarely are such proceedings invaded by those with lives, but innocent strangers have been known on occasion to wander into an art house just for fun. Not long ago, I was flabbergasted to see a gaggle of so-I'm-like-duh teenagers at a screening of Jean Renoir's *The Rules of the Game*, though I soon realized that they were film-studies students doing their homework. A few weeks later, I went to the opening of a Budd Boetticher festival presented by the Film Society of Lincoln Center, and was equally astonished to find myself seated behind an intense-looking man who'd brought along a pair of small children. Wondering how a fellow who bore all the stigmata of film geekery could have forgotten himself long enough to father two cute kids, I tuned in on their preshow chatter. Would they be lisping about aspect ratios or dye-transfer processes? Far from it. No sooner had I started listening than I overheard a snatch of conversation so appropriate to the occasion that I scribbled it down in my notebook:

Child #1 (firmly): "Two wrongs don't make a right!"
Child #2 (smugly): "Oh, yes, they do!"

The children didn't know it, but the conundrum about which they were arguing was the subject of the movie their father had brought them to see. *Ride Lonesome*, originally released in 1959, is a B western directed by Boetticher and starring Randolph Scott. Unlike such better-remembered films as *Shane*, *Rio Bravo*, and *The Searchers*, it is known only to a small but stalwart band of critics and buffs who regard it as a minor masterpiece. As a rule, fanatics are not to be trusted on any subject whatsoever, least of all one that falls within the compass of their obsessions—but every once in a while, they're right.

In certain ways, Hollywood today is just as it was a half-century ago: a company town, a plantation devoted to the manufacture of cultural commodities to please the largest possible number of people. Then as now, nearly all it produced fit neatly into the pigeonholes of

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a limited number of highly stylized genres: gangster movies, costume dramas, romantic comedies, westerns.

The main difference is that in the old days, such films were mass-produced on the assembly lines of the major studios. Americans of all ages went to the movies once a week, and they expected to see something different every time they went. Hence the studio system, which ground out product fast enough to meet the omnivorous demand. Except for the occasional *Gone With the Wind*, the modern Spielberg-style "event" movies that now dominate Hollywood filmmaking didn't exist. You went to the movies not to see *Spider-Man* or *Lord of the Rings*, but simply to see a show. If the show in question was a western or a mystery, that was good; if it starred John Wayne or Robert Mitchum, that was better. But nobody went out of his way to see a Wayne western directed by Howard Hawks, much less a Mitchum mystery directed by Jacques Tourneur. You took what you got, and if what you got happened to be *Red River* or *Out of the Past*, then you got lucky.

That's why so many of the best films made in Hollywood in the 1940s and 1950s were westerns and mysteries. Precisely because they *were* commodities, their makers tended to be ignored by the front office: So long as a director's last picture turned a profit, however small, he got to make another one. All that mattered was that he stayed more or less within the accepted conventions of the genre—and, as it turned out, the conventions of the western and the mystery happened to be wonderfully well suited to the artful telling of serious stories that were both entertaining and cheap to produce. The art, of course, was optional, and most such movies were as forgettable as a *Law and Order* rerun, but some of them were as good and as serious as a movie can be.

Randolph Scott didn't set out to make serious movies. A dignified, upper-middle-class gentleman from North Carolina, he went to Hollywood on a whim in 1928, caught the eye of an industry talent scout, and within a couple of years was churning out Zane Grey westerns by the score. As it happens, Scott also had a knack for light comedy—he even appeared in two Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers movies, *Roberta* and *Follow the Fleet*—and for no obvious reason he became typecast as the white-hatted good guy who rode a horse. Had the breaks fallen differently, he might well have evolved into an all-American version of Cary Grant (with whom he shared a bachelor pad in the 1930s).

All photos: Everett Collection.

Randolph Scott with Nancy Gates in Comanche Station . . .

After 1947, though, Scott started making westerns exclusively, and for several years they ranked among the highest-grossing movies in America. Most filmgoers under the age of sixty are puzzled by the scene in Mel Brooks's *Blazing Saddles* in which Cleavon Little attempts to persuade the craven townspeople of Rock Ridge to stand up to the evil Hedley Lamarr by telling them, "You'd do it for Randolph Scott." "Randolph Scott!" they respond in unison, then doff their hats reverently—an accurate indication of how closely identified Scott was with the western genre. He always played the same character, a lanky, dryly amusing cowboy with a Virginian accent who spoke only when spoken to and shot only when shot at, and you could take it for granted that he'd do the right thing in any given situation. If he'd been younger and prettier, he would have been too good to be true, but Scott was no dresser's dummy. He had a thin-lipped mouth and a hawk-like profile, and wasn't afraid to act his age on screen. Nobody in Hollywood, not even John Wayne, looked more believable in a Stetson.

On two occasions, in *Coroner Creek* (1948) and *Hangman's Knot* (1952), Scott wriggled out of his good-guy straitjacket to deliver cold-eyed, unsettlingly harsh performances that showed what he could do when given the chance, but otherwise he stuck to predictable B-plus oaters whose profits he shrewdly invested in the oil business. ("My outlook is purely mercenary," he told an interviewer.) Eventually, Scott's indifference caught up with him. Though he was at least as popular as John Wayne, Wayne consistently picked better directors and scripts, and by the mid-1950s, Scott was slipping into bottom-of-the-bill obscurity just as his younger competitor was becoming the most beloved American actor of his time.

Ironically, it was Wayne who turned Scott's career around. The two men had worked together twice in the 1940s, but didn't quite get along. In

. . . and with Karen Steele, James Best, Pernell Roberts, and James Coburn in Ride Lonesome.

1955, Wayne read a script called "Seven Men from Now" by a novice writer named Burt Kennedy, bought it for his production company, Batjac, and hired Budd Boetticher, an unknown journeyman director, to put it on the screen. Wayne was already committed to filming *The Searchers*, so when Boetticher asked him who he wanted to play the lead, he casually replied, "Let's use Randolph Scott. He's through."

Boetticher and Scott went on to make five more films together (plus *Westbound*, a forgotten potboiler that Boetticher directed simply to keep the collaboration going). *The Tall T* (1957), *Decision at Sundown* (1957), *Buchanan Rides Alone* (1958), *Ride Lonesome* (1959), and *Comanche Station* (1960), all co-produced by Scott and his partner Harry Joe Brown, run about seventy-five minutes each, the length of a typical B movie, and were shot quickly on location in the barren, rock-strewn hills of Lone Pine, California. The casts were kept small and star-free in order to hold down costs, and Scott and Brown cut other corners whenever they could: *Ride Lonesome* and *Comanche Station*, for example, contain no interior scenes whatsoever.

The clean, spare look of the Boetticher-Scott films is mirrored in their no-nonsense scripts. *Ride Lonesome* and *Comanche Station*, both written by Kennedy, are for all intents and purposes the same movie as *Seven Men from Now*—the basic plot mechanism is recycled from film to film, along with a few choice snippets of dialogue—while *Decision at Sundown* and *The Tall T*, the former doctored by Kennedy and the latter adapted by him from a novel by Elmore Leonard, arise from different situations but develop in similar ways. More often than not, Scott plays the part of a solitary, vengeful drifter who is searching for a man who has wronged him, usually by murdering his wife. In the course of his travels, he meets an unhappily married woman, to whom he is powerfully and illicitly attracted, and a villain who is charming and courageous—a hero gone bad, in other words. The villain is looking for the same man as Scott, but their interests are in conflict, forcing them into a climactic showdown.

What sounds repetitive on paper proves miraculously varied in practice, as Boetticher comes up with ever-fresh ways to frame his players among the sun-scorched rocks of Lone Pine, finding painfully austere beauty in that least seductive of landscapes. Though never obvious about it, he was among the most visually imaginative of western directors. (I once had the opportunity to ask him if his feel for composition had been shaped by the paintings of such western artists as Albert Bierstadt and Frederic Remington, to which he replied that while he liked their work, Renoir and Toulouse-Lautrec had meant even more to him.) Similarly, Burt Kennedy makes a virtue out of necessity by letting Scott and his engaging enemies spend most of their time talking instead of fighting, giving the best lines to the not-entirely-bad guys: Lee Marvin in *Seven Men from Now*, Richard Boone in *The Tall T*, Pernell Roberts in *Ride Lonesome*, Claude Akins in *Comanche Station*. It is Roberts, not Scott, who gets the line that could stand as the motto of all six films, "There are some things a man just can't ride around."

Scott was secure enough to let his colleagues do the talking, knowing that his gritty, hard-faced on-screen presence would speak for itself. The dashing young leading man of the 1930s now looked as though he'd been carved from a stump, and every word he spoke reeked of disillusion. Yet he continually found himself forced to make moral choices that were always clear but rarely easy.

What Scott *should* do at any given moment is never in doubt, but we also understand that doing it will not make him "happy" in any conventional sense of the word: He must do the right thing for its own sake, not in the hope of any immediate reward. Significantly, he sees the potential for redemption in the men he kills, slaying them reluctantly and only after giving them a fair chance to change their ways. Sometimes the woman's weak husband is killed, too, thus freeing her to fall in love with Scott, but in *Ride Lonesome* and *Comanche Station*, the best and most characteristic films of the series, he discharges his stern duty and rides off into the sunset without looking back, alone again and likely to remain so.

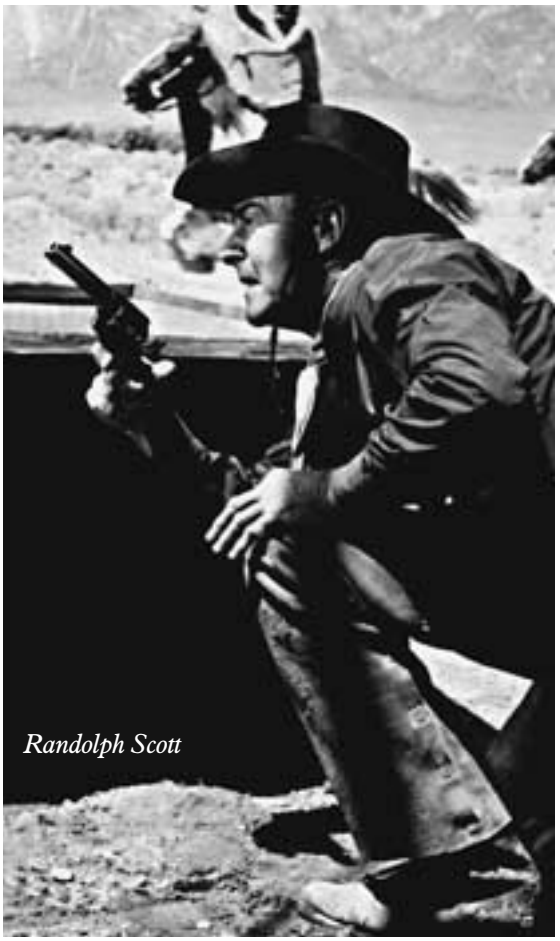
This was and is an unusual approach to the western, whose moral ambiguities generally prove on closer inspection to be superficial. John Wayne, for

instance, usually played strong men with tainted pasts who still knew the right thing to do. (This is what makes *Red River* and *The Searchers* Wayne's most morally interesting movies. In both cases, he knows what he has to do—kill Montgomery Clift and Natalie Wood—but it's the *wrong* thing.) Conversely, the "adult" westerns that followed in the wake of Sam Peckinpah's *The Wild Bunch*, the most influential western of the postwar era, tend to be nihilistic. The heroes are villains, the villains heroes, and everyone in sight is corrupt beyond hope of redemption.

Redemption, on the other hand, is the whole point of the Boetticher-Scott films. It is what Scott is seeking, and what he hopes to offer to the warped half-heroes whom he meets on his endless pilgrimage. And though Boetticher shies away from overt religious symbolism—the cross-like hanging tree in *Ride Lonesome* is a rare exception—it is hard to fathom Scott's old-fashioned integrity without supposing that he believes in something beyond his own iron will.

Why else would he insist on preserving his honor at the cost of his happiness? This message rings truer still as we look back at a century that might have been designed for the sole purpose of dramatizing the truth of Dostoevsky's terrible warning, "If there is no God, then anything is permitted, even cannibalism." I doubt that Randolph Scott ever got around to reading *The Brothers Karamazov*, but he and Boetticher knew by instinct that in a world without laws or lawmen, every man must choose between the moral integrity of the old-fashioned cowboy and the moral cannibalism of his self-willed enemies.

Though comparatively few critics are more than vaguely familiar with the Boetticher-Scott films, they have always had their fervent admirers, both here and abroad. André Bazin called *Seven Men from Now* "the most intelligent western I know, while being at the same time the least intellectual, the most subtle and least aestheticizing, the simplest and finest example of the form." But when Boetticher died last December, only one of them, *Comanche Station*, was available on videocassette, and so far as I know there are no plans to release any of the others. Nor are they likely ever to become cable-TV fodder, for they are at the same time too spare and concentrated to please the contemporary shoot-'em-up audience and too morally aware for the comfort of postmodernists.



Randolph Scott

Fortunately, all six films can be seen with reasonable regularity in art houses and on museum film series, where movie lovers continue to stumble onto them in much the same way that the novels of Dawn Powell keep on being rediscovered four decades after their author's demise. What's more, some of Randolph Scott's original fans are still alive. I stood behind two of them in the popcorn line at Lincoln Center's Walter Reade Theater, a pair of silver-haired dowagers whom you'd never have taken for western fans. Colin Powell had said something flaccid about Yasser Arafat that morning, and the women were grumbling about how weak-willed he was. "That's why I'm here today," the first one proclaimed without a trace of irony. "At least Randolph Scott always knew what to do." The other one nodded her head in emphatic agreement. No doubt stranger scenes have taken place in Manhattan since September 11, but that one was strange enough for me.

I like what André Bazin said about *Seven Men from Now*, but I like what the first old lady said about Randolph Scott even more: He always knew what to do, and whether he liked it or not, he did it. Midway through *The Tall T*, Richard Boone tries to explain to Scott why he became an outlaw. "I'm gonna have me a place someday," he says. "I thought about it, I thought about it a lot. A man should have somethin' of his own, somethin' to belong to, to be proud of." "And you think you'll get it this way?" Scott asks. "Sometimes you don't have a choice," the outlaw answers. "Don't you?" Scott replies.

That's what Randolph Scott and Budd Boetticher knew: Everybody has a choice. And that is why it is good to watch their movies at a time when America is struggling to deliver itself from the evil in which its citizens have long been taught to disbelieve. Without preaching or hectoring, Boetticher and Scott succeed in reminding us that there is a difference between hard choices and meaningless ones, between the uneasy honesty of moral ambiguity and the slick-walled abyss of moral relativism. I can't think of a better reason to go to the movies on a pretty spring day. ♦

"Last chance for one of your pithy bon mots."

Typecasting

Back in our February 25 issue, western writer Bill Croke reviewed Judy Blunt's prize-winning memoir *Breaking Clean*—regretting some of its easy feminist tropes, but praising its account of a childhood and marriage on the Hi Line in northern Montana. Like many other reviewers, Croke mentioned the scene in which, as punishment for not having lunch ready, Blunt's father-in-law took her typewriter into the barn and smashed it to pieces with a sledgehammer.

As an image for the woes of an aspiring writer and oppressed woman, the scene was hard to beat. Unfortunately, it also turns out to be made up—more proof of the iron law that when a story is too perfect to be true, it isn't. A notice of the book in the local newspaper prompted Blunt's father-in-law to respond, "When people ask me what is the best way to smash a typewriter, I have to tell them I don't have any idea. I've never tried to do it." Blunt has since admitted the story was invented.

Meanwhile, as an occasion for mockery, the announcement that Gwyneth Paltrow will star in a movie about the poets Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes is hard to resist. The swan-necked Paltrow bears about the same relation to Sylvia Plath as the swan-eyed Hugh Grant does to Ted Hughes. "The story has a terribly sad ending," the head of BBC Films David Thompson admitted—but, he added, "I think we can show that [Plath and Hughes's] marriage had many strong points and that the film can, in a way, be life enhancing."

Well, yes, life enhancing. I mean, here's the story of a talented and sad woman who, at age 30, turned on the gas and lay down in her kitchen—having first set out her children's morning milk. God forbid we take this as representing something dark and melancholy in human nature. *So she is come to this rare pass*, as Plath wrote in "The Queen's Complaint," *Whereby she treks in blood through sun and squall / And sings you thus: / "How sad, alas, it is / To see my people shrunk so small, so small."*

—J. Bottum

Books in Brief

Intellectuals and the American Presidency: Philosophers, Jesters, or Technicians? **by Tevi Troy (Rowman & Littlefield, 254 pp., $27.95).** Examining the style and responsibilities of a succession of scholars and generalists to play intellectual mascot at the White House, Tevi Troy tackles their common lack of a clear job description. Even back in the Kennedy White House, Arthur Schlesinger Jr. suffered from this problem. Although he helped draft speeches, set up a White House library, and served as emissary to the Northeastern intellectual elite, it was said that his job came with "a good address, but no clear responsibilities."

Perhaps even more instructive than Schlesinger's storied career is the tale Troy tells of Eric Goldman, Princeton historian and resident egghead in the Johnson White House. In a chapter that should serve as a warning to people of brains who come to Washington looking for power, we learn that the Ivy League professor stooped not only to drafting speeches for the first lady but also for her teenaged daughters.

Goldman's humiliation hardly ended there. He bucked the odds to generate significant buzz for a one-day festival of the arts to be hosted at Johnson's White House. The hottest ticket in town, however, became a publicity disaster when Robert Lowell, who'd already accepted an invitation to read from his poetry, wrote back to say that he wouldn't be coming on account of the administration's "strange" and "chauvinistic" actions in Vietnam. Goldman's Kennedyesque festival of the arts became the centerpiece for a news cycle of stories about Johnson's un-Kennedyesque relations with intellectuals.

In *Intellectuals and the American Presidency* Troy also takes a close look at the incredible energy of Daniel Patrick Moynihan in the Nixon White House. But after Moynihan the story became less romantic, as presidencies grew less salon-like and think tanks more important than brainy freelancers. It wasn't until Clinton that the position came back into vogue. Troy's chapter on the 1990s opens with a profile of William Galston and ends with a profile of Sidney Blumenthal—which shows the decline of the Clinton presidency during its eight years.

—David Skinner

O'Neill, Bono Wed

AP / Wide World Photos / Saurabh Das: Bono and O'Neill wear the traditional outfits presented to them in northern Ghana.

Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill and U2 frontman Bono were married yesterday, in what their tailor assured them were traditional Irish costumes. The marriage came after a whirlwind romance during a trip through Africa. "We skinny-dipped at a watering hole, and Paul told me about the aluminum business," Bono sighed, recounting the magic moment when they knew they were destined to be one. Mr. O'Neill is expected to drop his last name, resign from his post in the Bush cabinet, and join U2 on the banjo.

Philadelphia Freedom

John E. Chubb is chief education officer, Edison Schools; distinguished visiting fellow, Hoover Institution; and member, Hoover's Koret Task Force on K–12 Education.

Philadelphia, where America's founders gathered to declare independence and defend liberty, has struck another blow for freedom—and one that could be nearly as historic. This spring Philadelphia's School Reform Commission (SRC) voted to privatize up to 75 of the city's 240 schools. The management of many of Philadelphia's worst-performing schools is to be turned over to seven not-for-profit or for-profit organizations—including the University of Pennsylvania, Temple University, Edison Schools, and Chancellor-Beacon Schools.

Although other cities have contracted with outside organizations for the management of schools, and many cities, including Philadelphia, have allowed independent charter schools to provide a measure of choice in public education, **no city has come close to Philadelphia in "freeing up" the supply of public schools.** This fall more than a quarter of the 200,000-plus students in Philadelphia will be served by public schools not under the district's direct control.

The importance of Philadelphia's decision cannot be overstated. Philadelphia has struggled to educate its young people. Roughly 60 percent of Philadelphia's students failed the state's reading and math exams, and more than a third dropped out of high school. Three-fourths of the city's schools are identified as low performing, meaning that more than half of a given school's students are failing. Efforts to improve the schools have yielded minimal progress. These statistics are not unique to Philadelphia. Every city in America is grappling with the same problems to some degree.

What is unique to Philadelphia is the response. In December 2001, the governor of Pennsylvania and the mayor of Philadelphia agreed to an increase in state funding for Philadelphia's schools and to transfer control of the school district from the local board of education to the SRC. That agreement also outlined plans to privatize a large number of the city's lowest-performing schools. The boldness of this lies not so much in the takeover of the district by the state—states have done this with schools numerous times—but in the takeover of school management by entities other than the state or the district.

During the past decade policymakers became persuaded that schools in general, and particularly schools in large urban systems, will not improve substantially until they are subjected to the pressures of competition. Policymakers recognize that they will never satisfactorily mandate school improvement from above; the school practices that need to change are too numerous and complex to legislate. Competition offers a mechanism that has worked virtually everywhere except education to promote improvements in quality and efficiency.

Competition has not worked in education because it has never really been tried. For the past 150 years public education has been provided by school districts with the exclusive right to operate public schools within their jurisdiction. In recent years policymakers have chipped away at this exclusive right with charter schools and voucher programs. But the Philadelphia story is different—its privatization initiative is large scale. Therein lies a historic opportunity to set a new course for America's public schools and to provide new hope for America's urban youth.

— John E. Chubb

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