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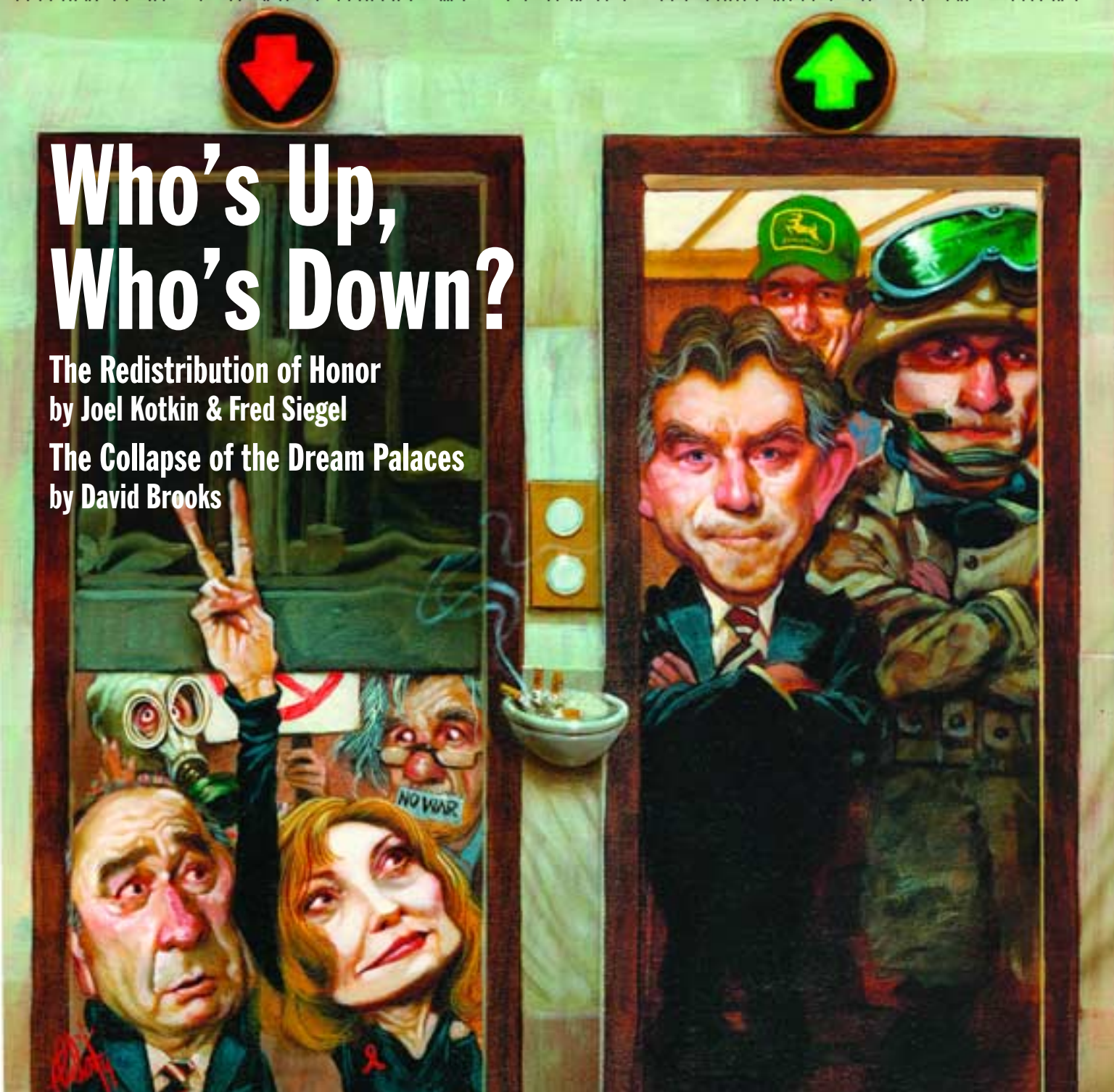

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A Nation at Risk: Twenty Years Later

Diane Ravitch is a research professor, New York University; distinguished visiting fellow, Hoover Institution; and member, Hoover's Koret Task Force on K–12 Education.

Twenty years ago this spring, the National Commission on Excellence in Education served a wake-up call to the nation in the form of a report called *A Nation at Risk,* warning that American education faced a "rising tide of mediocrity" unless actions were taken to raise expectations and achievement. Although the history of American education is littered with reports by distinguished commissions that quickly disappear from public consciousness, *A Nation at Risk* was different. It not only captured national attention, it also set the terms of debate about schooling for a generation after its publication.

The response to the report was truly amazing. Task forces, committees, and study groups were convened across the nation to discuss its implications. Most states raised graduation requirements, increased teachers' salaries, and began to look for ways to measure their schools' effectiveness. With its emphasis on improving student achievement, the report led to other reforms, including national goals set by the president and governors in 1990, the standards movement, increased course taking, and market-based approaches.

A product of its time, ***A Nation at Risk* proved to be an antidote to many of the pedagogical fads of the 1960s** such as classrooms without walls, fluffy electives, and watered-down curricula that generated public skepticism. When it became clear in the mid-1970s that SAT scores had been plummeting for nearly a decade, the public was positively alarmed. Hungry for a diagnosis that made sense, it embraced *A Nation at Risk*. Not only was the report written in plain English, but its emphasis on commonsense reforms such as raising expectations, strengthening the curriculum, improving the teaching force, and lengthening the school year clearly struck a chord.

Two decades later, ***A Nation at Risk* remains significant in terms of setting the debate and ushering in an era of reform in education, but its goals have not yet been realized.** The changes wrought by twenty years of task forces, committees, and study groups have not produced the hoped-for improvement in student achievement. Few of the commission's recommendations were properly implemented, and many of those that were proved too timid to bring about effective educational reform.

A report from the Koret Task Force on K–12 Education at the Hoover Institution concludes that it is time to go beyond the recommendations of *A Nation at Risk*. Created to study the nation's response to *A Nation at Risk* twenty years later, the Koret report lays out a reinvigorated reform agenda for our schools based on the principles of choice, transparency, and accountability: Choice to bring flexibility and innovation to how education is provided; transparency to reveal information about how the education system is working; and accountability to demonstrate that our children are learning.

The challenge before us today, as in the past, is to secure equal educational opportunity. Every American child should have the same opportunities for an excellent education. The real issue today is whether the schools are good enough to prepare students for the challenges of the twenty-first century. We cannot rest until they are.

— Diane Ravitch

Interested in reading more?

***Contact us to receive a complimentary copy of chapter one, the* Findings and Recommendations of the Koret Task Force on K–12 Education.**

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An obstetrician in Illinois pays $110,100 a year for malpractice insurance. Next door in Wisconsin, the same doctor would pay $27,800. Why?

There's no good answer, except that the U.S. medical malpractice system is badly broken, and it's threatening the accessibility, affordability and quality of healthcare for millions. Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans cover nearly one in three Americans. Eighty-eight percent of these plans report that the malpractice problem increases healthcare costs and decreases access to care – especially for high-risk specialties. Three-quarters of physicians responding to a Harris survey in February said malpractice concerns cause them to order unnecessary tests and make redundant referrals.

Americans know they're picking up the tab for these preventable costs. A separate Harris survey found that 58 percent favor new legislation to limit medical liability and reduce the costs of medical malpractice insurance.

The problem doesn't end there. A new report by the Department of Health and Human Services found that because of the malpractice predicament, "more patients in more states are facing greater difficulty in obtaining access to doctors." Rising rates cause some physicians to refuse high-risk procedures, move their practices to more malpractice-friendly jurisdictions or retire from medicine entirely. Again, Americans know the score. Fifty-nine percent think that malpractice suits and doctors' fear of being sued harm the quality of medical care.

Fortunately, there are steps we can take now to fix this problem, before it gets worse. President Bush has proposed new legislation, based on a California law with a quarter-century track record of controlling malpractice costs. The President's proposal has the support of the American Medical Association and the American Hospital Association. We believe it offers an excellent framework.

Like California and other states that have enacted malpractice reform, the President's proposal would limit "non-economic" damages to $250,000. An analysis by *USA Today* shows that states limiting such awards to $500,000 or less have average malpractice premiums 23 percent lower than states without limits.

As the nation's largest family of healthcare insurance companies, it's clear to us that solving the problem of rising healthcare costs requires a coordinated approach to out-of-control malpractice costs. Most Americans agree.

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Extra, Extra: Clinton Appointees Diss Bush

Chances are excellent that you have never heard of an obscure executive branch body called the Cultural Property Advisory Committee. According to the State Department website, "State accepts requests from countries for import restrictions on archaeological or ethnological artifacts, the pillage of which places their national cultural heritage in jeopardy. The Cultural Property Advisory Committee, appointed by the president of the United States, reviews these requests and makes recommendations to the United States Department of State."

An exhaustive Nexis search turns up just 165 mentions of this group in the previous 19 years—until April 17, 2003, when it made headlines. Why the sudden interest? Because the chairman and two members of the committee resigned in protest over the supposed looting of the National Museum of Iraq. As the *Washington Post* headline on the front page of the Style section excitedly put it, "Bush Panel Members Quit Over Looting: Cultural Advisers Say U.S. Military Could Have Prevented Museum Losses."

Washington lives for such moments of high drama—a rebuke to the president! Principled resignations by members of his own team! Think Cy Vance departing the Carter State Department over the attempted hostage rescue in Iran; Anthony Lake quitting the Nixon NSC staff over the bombing in Cambodia. And now, Martin E. Sullivan, chairman of the Cultural Property Advisory Committee, who, the *Post* reported, wrote a resignation letter to the president complaining that, "While our military forces have displayed extraordinary precision and restraint . . . in securing the Oil Ministry and oil fields—they have been nothing short of impotent in failing to attend to the protection of [Iraq's] cultural heritage."

Sullivan, the *Post* noted, was resigning a chairmanship he had held since 1995. *1995?* Yes, if you do the arithmetic you'll notice that the people the *Post* coyly refers to as "Bush panel members" are holdover Clinton appointees. Somehow, this useful bit of data failed to make it into the *Post*'s account.

Sullivan, to be fair, wasn't hiding anything. He acknowledged that he was shortly going to be replaced anyway and that his resignation was therefore "simply symbolic." But it was an astonishing bit of naivete—if that's what it was—for the leading paper in a company town, where the company business is politics, to leave out a political angle to the resignations.

Now, why did we refer above to the "supposed looting"? It's true that the museum was sacked. But it's not at all clear who did it, when it happened (whether before or after U.S. forces took Baghdad), or even whether it was looting at all. The same day the resignations were announced, a number of experts said the evidence pointed to a theft, with help from inside the museum. "It looks as if at least part of the theft was a very deliberate planned action," said McGuire Gibson, a professor of Mesopotamian architecture at the University of Chicago and president of the American Association for Research in Baghdad. "They were able to obtain keys from somewhere for the vaults and were able to take out the very important, the very best material."

So it's not clear whether the disaster at the National Museum was the first failure of the U.S. occupation or the last act of Baathist perfidy, and in the moral accounting there's a world of difference between the two. Seem's like the kind of distinction you might want pinned down before submitting your principled letter of resignation. ♦

There's No Pity Like Self-Pity

There's trouble in River City. While allied troops have been busy liberating Iraqis, the forces of oppression have been advancing here in America. A "climate of fear" has descended; people are afraid to speak out; plus, the Baseball Hall of Fame was rude to movie star Susan Sarandon and her companion Tim Robbins.

How do we know people are afraid to speak out? Because a P.R. campaign—complete with television appearances, speeches at the National Press Club, and columns in major news magazines—has alerted us to the crushing of dissent.

Anna Quindlen smuggled out a dispatch last week—headlined "The Sounds of Silence"—to a samizdat journal called *Newsweek* (worldwide circulation 4.4 million). "Last month," she reported, "a United Way chapter in Florida disinvited the actress Susan Sarandon from a fund-raising luncheon at which she'd agreed to speak. This was scarcely surprising. . . . With war looming, the Oscar-winning actress, who has been outspokenly liberal on a variety of social issues and consistently critical of the invasion of Iraq, must have suddenly seemed akin to a cactus."

Worse was in store for Sarandon. The Baseball Hall of Fame, which had planned a 15th anniversary screening

and celebration of the movie *Bull Durham*, in which she and Robbins had starring roles, cancelled the event. As Robbins noted in an April 15 speech at the National Press Club, "This is a crucial moment for all of us. . . . Both of us last week were told that both we and the First Amendment were not welcome at the Baseball Hall of Fame." (The Robbins speech, besides being aired on C-SPAN, was e-mailed to us by Fenton Communications, the leading lefty P.R. firm.)

Strict constructionists will argue that the First Amendment forbids Congress from abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, while saying nothing about Susan Sarandon's public appearances. But as Justice Douglas famously observed, "specific guarantees in the Bill of Rights have penumbras, formed by emanations from those guarantees."

Or, in this case, by emanations, gaseous in form, from the actress's life partner. "This past weekend," Robbins informed us, "Susan and I and the three kids went to Florida for a family reunion of sorts. Amidst the alcohol and the dancing, sugar-rushing children, there was, of course, talk of the war. The most frightening thing about the weekend was the amount of times we were thanked for speaking out against the war because that individual speaking thought it unsafe to do so in their own community in their own life."

But perhaps we should give the last word to Madonna. "Anybody who has anything to say against the war or against the president or whatever is punished, and that's not democracy," she said last week on her VH1 special. The punishment in her case consisted of criticism of her latest music video, which she decided to pull from the air. Oddly enough, *Access Hollywood* gave her complaints the headline "Madonna Speaks Out"—a cruel jest at a time when she is being made to shut up. And if Madonna can be silenced, truly no one is safe. ♦

Happy Purim

MEMRI, the indispensable group that translates the ravings of the Saudi and Egyptian press, informs us that the career of Dr. Umayma Jalahma goes from success to success. Last year, Jalahma published an article in the Saudi daily *Al-Riyadh* warning that for the holiday of Purim, "the Jewish people must obtain human blood so that their clerics can prepare the holiday pastries. . . . That affords the Jewish vampires great delight as they carefully monitor every detail of the blood-shedding with pleasure." Following high-level protests from the U.S. government, Jalahma was booted from *Al-Riyadh*—only to end up on another government-funded paper. But last week he lectured at the Arab League's "Zayed Center for Coordination and Follow-Up" on the origins of the U.S. war against Saddam. (Hint: It was timed to coincide with Purim.) Past guests of the Zayed Center, incidentally, include Al Gore, James Baker, Kurt Waldheim, Jimmy Carter, and Lyndon Larouche. ♦

Casual

Face Time

It's more than a decade since my wife Cita and I came to Washington, with the intention of spending a year here before returning to New York. The "why" we came is easy: Irving Kristol, the Pied Piper of the neoconservative set, persuaded us that the intellectual excitement of the Washington policy world would suit us better than more years of the commercial excitement of the New York world. And with Irving and Bea doing the introductions, we quickly became part of a circle that proved intellectually exciting, indeed—people who think big thoughts share them freely, and debate them civilly.

Besides, Cita fell in love with the trees. There seem to be a lot of trees in Washington—green ones, red ones, white ones; tall ones, short ones; all sorts of trees. If that's what turns you on, Washington is the place to be, especially when it isn't so buried in snow or so searingly hot that to venture out of doors is an act of foolish courage.

But it isn't the weather that gets to me. Or the boring newspaper that dominates D.C.—bias I can live with, but boring is another matter, and one that New Yorkers, who live in a town in which there is real competition to attract readers, don't have to up put with. But even boring would be tolerable, if it weren't for the main business of this town.

No, not politics. Politics can be an honorable profession, practiced by men and women who are trying to make life better for others. Indeed, those who have climbed the greasy pole are generally intelligent, dedicated, and in my experience, surprisingly accessible.

It is the sale of face time. Before I came here I thought that face time was something you bought from the likes of Georgette Klinger who, paid for her time, would do wonders for your face. I was wrong.

Face time seems to be the minutes some supplicant can squeeze from a person in a position—or thought to be in a position, or pretending to be in a position—of what in Washington is called "power." The wielders of this power can be anyone from the president's inner circle, to a legislator unknown in his own district, to almost anyone wearing an identification badge around his neck.

It amazes me that these possessors of vast power invariably announce, or have their secretaries announce, "This is the White House calling." For some, this is indeed true. But others are housed in buildings far less distinguished than the White House. So, when I first arrived in Washington it was my habit to ask these lesser lights how a house can possibly dial a phone, but the uncomprehending silence at the other end of the line quickly taught me that these are not the sort of people I would likely meet at a Woody Allen movie.

Darren Gygi

So I take the calls—but refuse to stand at attention during the conversation. It is generally some assistant deputy undersecretary of something or other who wants to meet to learn something about some economic issue, and is prepared to devote minutes and minutes to absorbing a complicated subject. Being public spirited, at one time I would agree to a meeting.

Only to find at the last minute that the assistant deputy undersecretary of something or other was too busy, and would I please meet with the assistant to the assistant deputy undersecretary of something or other? Who very shortly before the appointed hour would call to change the date, something far more important than learning the answer to the question that was just yesterday bedeviling him having come up. It is astonishing how many low level bureaucrats are suddenly and regularly summoned to the Oval Office to advise the president how best to run the country.

I have now learned from more experienced Washingtonians that it is common practice for what are laughingly called public servants to line up appointments, and then when the time comes decide which one it is convenient for them to keep. After all, they are offering face time, and as everyone in Washington should know, face time is valuable. You can brag about having spent time with some bureaucrat to clients, or your mother, or your old friends in New York who are still under the illusion that an assistant to the assistant deputy undersecretary of something or other is a person of consequence.

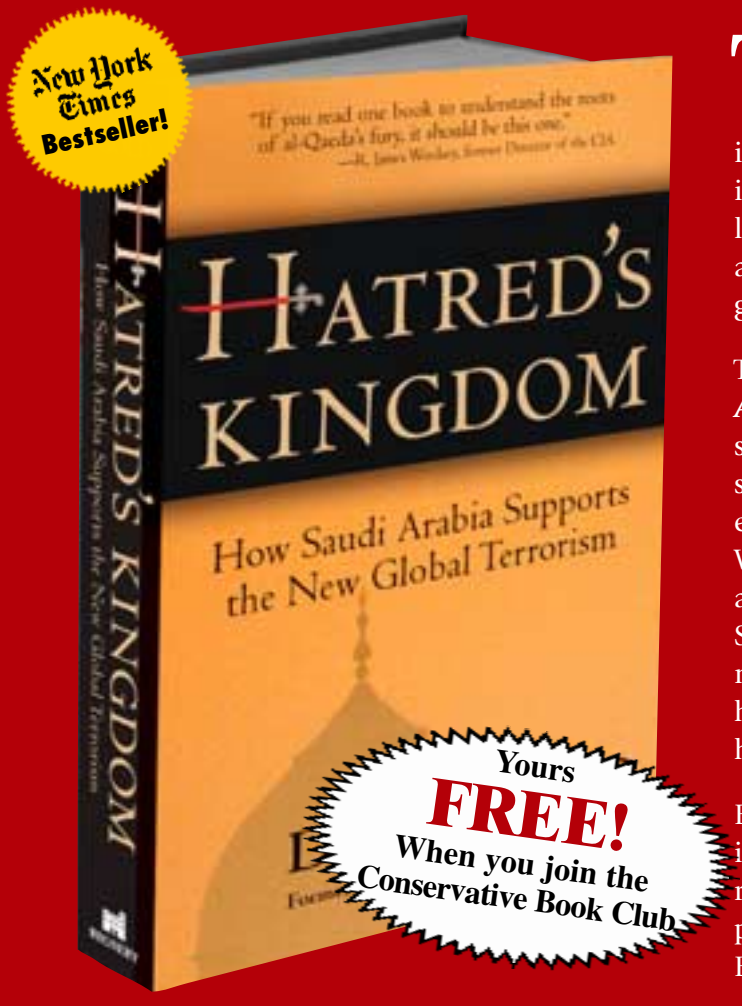
In other towns this would be called rudeness. Here it is simply part of daily life, accepted by consenting adults as the way business is conducted. It's a good thing that America includes cities like New York, Phoenix, Denver, and other places where real people go to real jobs to create real wealth for Washington bureaucrats to redistribute and waste. Even Los Angeles has a product—navel oranges, I think. Or is it Hollywood lemons?

So why stay? For one thing, there is that congenial bunch of scholars and policymakers who think, debate, share, and have fun. And, there are always the trees.

Irwin M. Stelzer

Where is a violent, America-hating brand of Islam solidly in the cultural mainstream and maintained by the government?

It's in our "ally," Saudi Arabia



The Saudi government postures and preens about its opposition to terrorism, but there's much more linking them to terrorism than just the fact that the September 11 terrorists were mostly Saudis — in fact, there is evidence linking the highest levels of Saudi government and society to radical and frankly terrorist Muslim groups.

That evidence is in ***Hatred's Kingdom: How Saudi Arabia Supports the New Global Terrorism,*** a shocking new exposé by Israel's former ambassador to the United Nations, Dore Gold. Gold explores the violent origins of the fanatical Wahhabi sect that dominates Saudi government and culture. He reveals how they gained control of Saudi Arabia, withstood attempts of dislodgement, and made the desert kingdom into a hothouse for militant Islamic radicalism, spreading hatred and violence all over the globe.

Best of all, Gold offers a solid answer to the burning question: after 9/11, is Saudi Arabia a reformed peacemaker or an unrepentant accomplice? Find out when you join the Conservative Book Club!

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Swoon-proof Vermont

David Tell writes ("Swooning for Howard Dean," April 14) that "Dean remains popular back home for the most part." This is not necessarily true. According to a fall 2002 poll sponsored by the *Rutland Herald/Times Argus* newspapers, Vermonters have mixed feelings about their former governor. (The poll is available at *http://rutlandherald.nybor.com/avermontpoll/october2002.html*.) When asked if they approved or disapproved of Howard Dean running for president in 2004, only 38 percent approved, while 49 percent disapproved, and 13 percent were unsure.

If the 2004 presidential election were held today, who would Vermonters vote for if the choice were between Howard Dean, the Democrat, and George W. Bush, the Republican? You would think liberal Vermont would automatically choose the Democrat, and certainly one who had won election so many times with hefty margins of victory. But the results were: Bush 46 percent, Dean 34 percent, and 20 percent undecided.

Libby Sternberg
Rutland, VT

Dissenters, not Traitors

William Kristol ("The War for Liberalism," April 7) asserts that the "Dominique de Villepin" American left hates John Ashcroft so much that we hope terrorism will succeed. Kristol attributes to us not only heartless malice but also unpardonable stupidity. We know well that another terrorist tragedy would give the enemies of civil liberties their perfect pretext.

Kristol also implies we leftists "hate" (his word) Donald Rumsfeld and conservatives so much that we support Saddam Hussein. Our real fear is not that the Bush administration will triumph over a repulsive petty tyrant who is the enemy of convenience, but that it will fail even to combat our true enemies.

By abandoning arms control and nonproliferation, the administration guarantees the spread of weapons of mass destruction, no matter how many "rogues" it invades. By neglecting climate change and global poverty, it invites a century of strife. By scorning international law, it incites generalized lawlessness and terrorism.

Kristol's Manichaean terms virtually brand dissent as treason. It makes one wonder whether in sending American democracy to Iraq, he does not intend to exile it there. Liberals—and conservatives—who do not share the left's views should reject this rhetoric of coercion.

David Keppel
Bloomington, IN

Defining Debt

I wholeheartedly agree with Irwin M. Stelzer's prescription for dealing with Iraq's debts ("Forgive Them His Debts," April 21). Iraq should repudiate

Saddam's debts. The U.S. government should encourage the interim Iraqi administration to do so. Privatize the economy and let a thousand enterprises bloom, so that the energies of a newly freed people will enable them to enjoy the fruits of a free economy, thereby (in time) replenishing Iraq's treasury.

It is only fitting that neither Russia, France, Germany, China, nor any other country that aided and abetted Saddam's crimes should now profit from the salubrious circumstances that we, with our blood and treasure, have made possible. We should encourage the new Iraqi government to deal with U.S. and British companies—to the extent that they can provide goods and services at competitive prices. Let's just say that they owe it to us to give our entrepreneurs a first right of refusal on future business. As we are not asking for a reimbursement for the cost of the war, it is an honorable compensation for the lives and money we have spent.

Harry B. Oesman
Del Mar, CA

Saving Private Flipper

As a former Navy lieutenant junior grade and surface warfare officer who deployed to the Persian Gulf in 1991 and 1998, now working for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), I understand fully the need to protect the safety of our troops. One of PETA's staffers, Ravi Chand, is a Marine Reservist in Iraq, and we want him to come back safely. But the answer does not lie in putting innocent animals in danger in shark-infested, mine-filled waters ("Flipper Goes to War," The Scrapbook, April 7).

Our soldiers deserve the best defense. We have the most advanced military in the world; it's ridiculous to continue to depend on animals. With today's technology, there are far more effective ways of detecting mines and chemical weapons than using dolphins, one of whom went AWOL within hours of his "deployment."

Animals know nothing of al Qaeda or Saddam Hussein. They are very much like civilians caught in the crossfire, and it is wrong to deliberately put those who are at our mercy in harm's way. It's time Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld gave the animals an honorable discharge.

William Rivas-Rivas
Norfolk, VA

• • •

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September 11, 2001–April 9, 2003

America was attacked a little over a year and a half ago. This assault was the product of two decades of American weakness in the face of terror and three decades of American fecklessness in the Middle East. From the barely-responded-to bombing of the Marine barracks in Lebanon in 1983 to the host of subsequent, little-noticed or quickly forgotten attacks in the later 1980s and in the 1990s, we came to be seen as a "weak horse." That characterization was Osama bin Laden's, and he made it with reason.

Similarly, from the oil embargo of 1973 through the destruction of a free and democratic Lebanon in the mid-1970s by the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Syrians, to the Khomeini revolution in Iran, the accelerated Saudi export of violent Wahhabi Islam to America and the world, and Saddam Hussein's brutalities in the 1980s and 1990s, the United States rolled with the punches. Saddam, to cite an egregious example, was allowed to stay in power after being routed in the Gulf War, then held accountable only on rare occasions for continually violating the ceasefire he signed. Along the way, the United States decided its proper response to Middle East tyranny and brutality should be not to punish our enemies and stand up for our principles, but rather to focus on a "peace process" between democratic Israel and the master-terrorist Yasser Arafat.

The era in which the American stance was one of doubt, weakness, and retreat came to an end on September 11.

But that era—in which the American stance was one of doubt, weakness, and retreat, in which we failed to affirm our most cherished principles or even stand up for ourselves—came to an end on September 11, 2001. The United States committed itself to defeating terror around the world. We committed ourselves to reshaping the Middle East, so the region would no longer be a hotbed of terrorism, extremism, anti-Americanism, and weapons of mass destruction. The first two battles of this new era are now over. The battles of Afghanistan and Iraq have been won decisively and honorably. But these are only two battles. We are only at the end of the beginning in the war on terror and terrorist states.

The Taliban regime that provided safe haven and support for al Qaeda has been removed, and up to two million Afghan refugees have gone home. One of the two dangerous rogue regimes that have dominated the Persian Gulf—the political heart of the volatile and crucial Middle East—has been overthrown. Some 50 million Muslims, liberated from brutal governments, now have a chance to live decent and normal lives. The war on terror, meanwhile, has gone extraordinarily well. Though the threat of another serious terrorist strike on America has not vanished, there has been none since the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11. Law enforcement authorities have uprooted al Qaeda sleeper cells at home, and friendly governments have cracked down on anti-American terrorists abroad.

We are a strong nation. But a successful response to the challenges that culminated in September 11 was by no means inevitable. Let's be honest, and let's even run the risk of being denounced for partisanship: If Bill Clinton had still been president on September 11, and were still president now, the Taliban *might* be gone, but Saddam would still be in power, and we would still be considering P.C.-acceptable ways to fight the war on terror at home and U.N.-acceptable ways to do so abroad.

Leadership matters. President Bush, above all, but also Vice President Dick Cheney, National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, and Attorney General John Ashcroft, among others, have risen to the challenge of September 11. The American military has risen to the challenge with two brilliant and innovative campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq. The American people, too, have risen to the challenge. Many battles remain to be fought, both military and political, many tests of America's resolve. But the war on terror and terrorist states—the defining challenge of this moment—is well begun.

—William Kristol

End the Occupation . . .

Of Lebanon.

BY CLAUDIA ROSETT

WITH SADDAM HUSSEIN kaput, it's time to address another mess in the Middle East, time for the United States to champion the trampled rights of an oppressed people, time to end the occupation. It's time, in sum, for Syria to get out of Lebanon.

Syria's purloining of an entire neighboring country has helped shore up the Baathist Assad dynasty in Damascus, while serving as a source of violent instability in the region. By almost every measure—totalitarian rule, terrorist sponsorship, double-dealing bad faith—Syria's regime ranks among the chart-toppers worldwide. But ever since Syrian troops rolled into Lebanon as "peacekeepers" in 1976, and Damascus consolidated its domination via the ill-conceived 1989 Taif Agreement, the bizarre operating assumption, even in the democratic West, has been that occupation by Syria is somehow a formula for Lebanese "stability."

Hardly. Two great evils have come of it so far. The first is Syria's subletting of Lebanon to terrorist groups—most notoriously Hezbollah, which ranks number one among terrorist killers of Americans abroad, sends murderers into Israel, and has taken to threatening the United States directly. Hezbollah gets support and arms from Iran and Syria. What its thugs provide Damascus, in return, is the ability to threaten and attack Israel from bases just outside Syria's borders, deflecting blame from Damascus and making chronic trouble between Lebanon and Israel. That, in turn, plays as the chief pretext for Syria to stay in Lebanon, to promote yet more "peace" and "stability."

In truth, Lebanon, along with being a handy financial hub and luscious slice of seaside real estate, is also one of the prime factors that makes impoverished, wretched Syria a player of heft in the region, a colonial power cultivating trouble. If the United States really aims to produce peace in this part of the Middle East, the first road map to unfold would be the one showing the roads that could take Syria's occupation force of soldiers, secret police, and pet terrorists back to Damascus. How Bashar Assad's regime would survive that humiliation, with its accompanying loss of Lebanese tribute, is an interesting question. Maybe it wouldn't, and that, too, would be a step forward for the region.

The second evil of Syria's colonial venture is the internal corrosion of Lebanon, otherwise the most promising candidate in the region for Arab democracy. If you reach back to the days before Yasser Arafat arrived with his wrecking crew in the 1970s and the country descended into civil war, Lebanon held pride of place as the only Arab nation with democratic institutions. It was the Paris—or perhaps we might better say, the London—of the Middle East. That's what allowed a mix of Muslims, Christians, and related sects to work out their differences without killing each other and threatening their neighbors. This is a valuable legacy, deserving of protection it has not received. Lebanon's civil war ended in 1990, but Syria stayed on. The Israelis, who came in to shut down Arafat in 1982, withdrew their last troops in 2000, but Syria is still there—inviting fights over the disputed scrap of land called Shabaa Farms. And the squandering of Lebanon's true assets proceeds apace.

What are those assets? Unlike such carefully guarded gas stations as Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, Lebanon is famous for its cosmopolitan culture, liberal heritage, and the enterprise and skills of its people. In recent decades that has counted for little in the backroom barter and Nobel Peace-prize contests of Middle East politics. But one of the great insights of the Bush post-September 11 foreign policy is that stability and peace are built not on oil, but on free societies. By these lights, Lebanon contains treasure in greater abundance than anyplace else in the Middle East; something that for purposes of real progress is more valuable than oil. It's called human capital.

Last December, I visited Beirut, curious to see what kind of democratic opposition could be found. There are many such people—most of them Christian, but not all. Given Syria's ability to meddle in their lives, they were surprisingly outspoken, quite clear about the need for democratic self-rule, and they all warned that it was unwise for Washington to keep tolerating Syria's Baathist infestation of Lebanon. "What is taking place here is the advent of a police state," one lawyer told me. "We don't understand why the U.S. is accepting that Lebanon would vanish as an example of pluralism." They warned that all the trends were in the wrong direction. "You allow Syria to dominate the country in such a way as to create, later, monsters," a scholar told me.

On one particularly interesting evening, I met with half a dozen college students. They came from a number of schools and a variety of backgrounds. They all understood the value of democratic institutions; they all wanted to see Lebanon restored to the roster of free nations. And all but one wanted to leave.

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Illustration by Peter Steiner

They saw no hope of liberation, and no future in a Lebanon occupied by Syria. One compared the situation to the Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe. Another noted, "Before the Israeli withdrawal, they said Syria was necessary to protect us from the Israelis. Then the Israelis withdrew, and the Syrians are still here." Yet another remarked, "We don't have any problems with the people of Syria. It's their government."

Good points, all. Syria's government, even for most of its own 17 million people, is a horror, both repressing and beggaring them to an extent that has driven more than 1 million of them into Lebanon in search of work, overwhelming Lebanon's much smaller population of just under 4 million. In fact, there are two classes of Syrians in Lebanon. There are Assad's select squads of thugs, who pull the strings, bully dissidents, and anoint the local politicians. And there are the impoverished Syrian migrant workers, who last December were selling bottled water and Santa Claus hats in traffic. One of the odder moments of my stay came at a pleasant outdoor café, where I was interviewing a dapper member of the Lebanese parliament. He was explaining why he believed Syria had something to offer in the way of stability and progress, when a thin man in frayed clothes stopped at our table, a street peddler, selling walnuts. My café companion dismissed him from our presence with a wave, and a scornful aside to me—"a Syrian."

One of the most notable effects of Syrian rule is the demonization of Israel. Even among the more vocal opposition, people turned deeply cautious about even touching on Israel. This subject, more than any other, can land Lebanese in prison. They are not only forbidden all contact with Israelis; it is a crime even to possess books, films, or toothpaste from Israel. Given half a chance, the Lebanese and Israelis would make natural trading partners. These are two peoples given to commerce, which is one of the great catalysts for achieving functional relations between nations. Syria, in imposing upon Lebanon its own no-contact policy, permits only ignorance and distance. Into that vacuum come fear and hate.

I spoke with one man from southern Lebanon who, on charges of having fraternized with Israelis, spent years in jail—in Syria. I will skip his name. He was detained when he went to Damascus on business, Damascus being the place most Lebanese must perforce transit in order to deal with the outer world. Before the Syrians threw him in prison, he was hung by his wrists, beaten, burned with cigarettes, and told he would die in Syria. He showed me his scars. Eventually he was released, but he counts himself now among the living dead—his life gone, his family estranged, with no way out of a country run by his former jailers.

The United States has plenty on its hands right now in Iraq, and much to attend to in other terrorist-sponsoring nations such as Iran and Saudi Arabia. But in delivering to Syria the message that the Middle East's era of tyrants and terrorists must end, it is vital to start repeating loudly and often a word that Secretary of State Colin Powell actually uttered last month, in a rare moment of candor on the matter of Syria's role in Lebanon: "occupation"—as in, this occupation must end. ♦

Social Workers of the World, Unite!

Jacques Chirac hobnobs with his new allies.

BY CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL

Paris

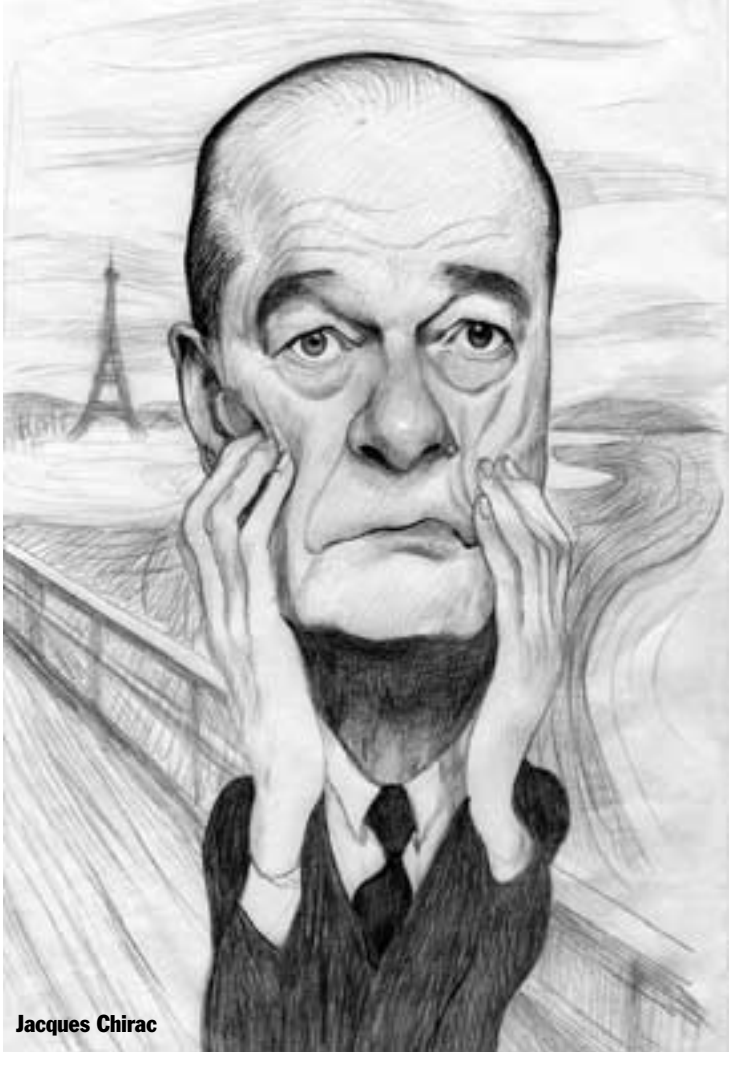
LAST WEEK, the semi-governmental French foundation IDDRI summoned 40 people to Paris to discuss "sustainable development," international relations, and the Third World. The discussion was meant to help prepare, on the eve of June's G-8 summit in the French alpine resort of Evian, a list of ways the developed countries can rescue the desperate ones.

Over the last two years a string of international conferences, agreements, and accords—from the Johannesburg meeting on development to the U.N.'s Monterrey summit on aid to the WTO's Doha "development round" of trade talks—has placed Third World hunger, disease, and poverty on the diplomatic front burner. But now the world is focused elsewhere: The United States is engaged in "remaking the Middle East." Hence the conference. French president Jacques Chirac, who hosted the meeting's final session, has staked his political life on the proposition that an international order determined by the United States is a dangerous thing.

It is certainly dangerous for the class of university activists and leftist political leaders (misleadingly lumped together as the "anti-globalization" movement) who until September 11, 2001, were riding high. Until then, they were gaining increasing acceptance for their view that the hour of the nation-state was over, and that transnational bodies would now solve most of the world's problems. "Three years ago we would have talked about how to improve the system," said former Dutch environment minister Jan Pronk at the conference. "Now we talk of how to save the system."

Some in attendance were ideologists of the new global left, including Manuel Castells, the theorist of "networks" as power structures from the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya; the sociologist and anti-globalization organizer Candido Grzybowski of the Brazilian Institute of Social and Economic Analysis; and the economist Jeffrey Sachs, who directs the Earth Institute at Columbia University. Others were political leaders from the decade in which both the world economy and world government projects boomed, including Mexico's former president Ernesto Zedillo (now a professor of international economics at Yale) and former foreign minister Jorge Castñeda; and Jan Pronk. The group was rounded out with a mix of diplomats, writers, academics, and aid workers from Europe, the United States, and the Third World, of whom I was one.

There were plenty of constructive proposals and well-made points. Zedillo insisted that undertaking big projects in poor countries hinged on mending the transatlantic rift. He added that next September's session of WTO



Jacques Chirac

Earl Keleny

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negotiations will fail if the European Union, and particularly France, does not change its agricultural positions. "This is more important than access to medicines," he said.

Jan Pronk urged that representatives of "international civil society" be given a formal seat at future G-8 meetings. Billionaire philanthropist George Soros insisted that non-governmental organizations of the sort that many attendees represented were not identical to "international civil society"—although many NGOs claimed to speak in its name. Former *International Herald Tribune* CEO Peter Goldmark suggested that the SARS outbreak in Asia might be a chance for global-governance enthusiasts to prove they could devise helpful systems. The only U.N. representative in attendance, former Mauritanian ambassador to Washington Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, argued several times for the indispensability of the United States, since "the poorest countries will never have a chance without U.S. participation."

But such sentiments were rare. Two-thirds of the participants saw the United States as either the source of all the world's instability, poverty, and violence, or as culpable for not stopping it. While the conference's organizer Laurence Tubiana, a former adviser to Socialist prime minister Lionel Jospin, has written with some sensitivity of September 11, most of the invitees were otherwise inclined. As is usual at such conferences, September 11 went practically unmentioned. The Iraq war could thus be presented as a project hatched out of thin air by the demented imaginations of George W. Bush's cabinet and "the neoconservatives." To a large extent, it was an exercise in September-11-denial, a meeting of the high command of what the French philosopher André Glucksmann calls the "coalition of nostalgics for September 10, 2001."

Several of the participants stressed that "this is not a meeting about Iraq." But for most of the others, to ignore Iraq was to ignore the one big problem facing the world: America. Sunita Narain, editor of the Delhi-based Green magazine *Down to Earth*, described the United States as a "failed state," contrasting American democracy unfavorably with the "rich discourse" that prevails in her own country. Lloyd Axworthy, the Canadian ex-foreign minister, laid out a typology of international actors: "the fanatic" (presumably Osama bin Laden), "the bully" (presumably the United States), and the "rules-makers" (presumably the E.U., Canada, and other actors whom, Axworthy complains, "the neoconservatives describe as 'wimps'"). According to the Egyptian think-tank head Nader Fergany, the three pillars of the world order—peace, security, and justice—have been "destroyed by the superpower."

But none was as unrestrained in his bile as Jeffrey Sachs, who alleged that the United States "lets people die by the millions"—as a matter of policy—and that the world should "put the U.S. on notice that there are certain standards." His grounds for anger were that millions of lives could have been saved if the money spent on the Iraq war had been spent, first, on Third World health care and, second, on America's fulfilling the promise its negotiators undertook at Monterrey last year to devote 0.7 percent of American GDP to aid for the neediest countries. (He did not tally up the number of Africans who could have been saved had all the conferees flown coach.)

Just as there was a split between the two-thirds who felt the United States was the main problem facing the world and the minority viewpoint that the transatlantic relationship was worth rescuing, there was a split between those who assumed they'd been summoned to urge a manifesto on Chirac, and those who came to hold an open-ended academic discussion. Here, both were wrong. For the Evian agenda was largely drafted in March. The real reason for scheduling this encounter between Chirac and the panelists must lie elsewhere, and is most likely political.

Among Chirac's formidable gifts

as a politician is an ability to embrace interlocutors as good thinkers and good people while keeping a barge-pole's distance between himself and their programs. He ruled out, for instance, meeting with the "social summit" protesters who will be at Evian, on the grounds that he has invited representatives of twelve developing countries, and those developing countries are his priority. He expressed his admiration for the "hopes" raised by the Tobin tax (a proposal to fund the U.N. by taxing currency trades), and then he lamented that it was, alas, impractical. He announced that France had persuaded Russia to sign the Kyoto protocol on global warming. This announcement impressed the conferees, not because it increases the likelihood that global warming will be slowed but because it facilitates the portrayal of the United States as diplomatically isolated.

Chirac is not viscerally anti-American, and seems ill at ease with the Jacobin side of the global-governance movement. But that no longer matters. Since his stand against the United States on Iraq, the French president and the global-governance types are stuck with each other. France has abandoned its position embedded in NATO and the Atlantic alliance for one at the head of the U.N. and a revitalized "non-aligned" movement. In geostrategic terms, this is a booby prize (how many divisions has José Bové?), but it may have other benefits—even if they aren't evident right now. It is very important to Chirac that he get an accurate reading of the strength of his new alliance, the quality of the people who compose it, and the cost to him of maintaining it.

Is anti-globalization the natural politics of our interconnected, free-trading world? Or was it a hobby enthusiasm of the 1990s, valid only so long as the West was lulled by peace and prosperity? Six months ago, Chirac wouldn't have cared about the answer. Today, his future, and the diplomatic weight of France over the near and middle term, hinge on it. ♦

Lessons of a Three-Week War

Audacity works.

BY TOM DONNELLY

HERE BEGINNETH the lesson: "The major combat portions of the war are over."

The stunning success of the "combat portion" of Operation Iraqi Freedom challenges any understanding based upon previous military history. Vice President Dick Cheney's cutting comment about retired generals "embedded in television studios" is an understandable reaction, but Barry McCaffrey is neither a fool nor a coward. Indeed, during Operation Desert Storm he was the commander of what is now the 3rd Infantry Division, and he knows his trade as well as any soldier ever has. He also drove his subordinates relentlessly and was not above going the extra mile in search of a fight.

So it was not unreasonable for him to worry that three ground divisions and 900 airplanes was a small force to conquer a country the size of California. And had the operation gone according to the original plan, of course, it would have involved the 4th Infantry Division attacking through Turkey from the north. Going after a bloody regime in possession of weapons of mass destruction without 25 percent of your land combat power—and without any certainty of rapid reinforcement if things went badly—ran the risk of catastrophic failure when measured by traditional yardsticks.

So has the art of warfare indeed been "transformed?" Is this a new baseline of performance? What does the war mean for future U.S. military plans, programs, and strategies? Perhaps most important, what's the view from the Axis of Evil and what are their options for deterring and defeating America?

Debate about the lessons of the Iraq war began even before the fighting did. Although most of the attention has been directed toward the army's complaints about the size of the invasion force after the initial attack "stalled," airpower zealots didn't even wait for the war to begin. Whining about the "non-doctrinal application of airpower" has accompanied nearly every U.S. military action of the past decade—even, as in Kosovo, when airpower wins the war, it's never enough—and Operation Iraqi Freedom proved no exception.

Speaking at the American Enterprise Institute on February 25, retired general Buster Glosson, who planned the Gulf War air campaign, warned that "when you do not permit the Special Forces and the air capability and technology you have to accomplish the maximum, before you start [employing] ground forces, in a Roman legion fashion, you're asking for disaster." Glosson suggested that Donald Rumsfeld's Pentagon and Gen. Tommy Franks were "getting overly concerned about the wrong things," namely, Iraqi casualties, and that the price of victory might be "unmercifully different" than in 1991. "War can be too precise, you can be too careful, and the results are dead coalition forces."

The heavy army tread-heads, by contrast, leaped upon the comment by V Corps commander Lt. Gen. William Wallace that the Iraqi irregulars were not the "enemy we wargamed against." They used it to imply that

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Reuters / Paul Hanna

An F-14D Tomcat takes off from USS Kitty Hawk. The Navy strike fighters' success has been relatively unsung.

Defense Secretary Rumsfeld had intentionally limited the ground invasion to prove a budgetary and programmatic point about the need for lighter, more mobile ground units. Rather than seeing in the 3rd Infantry Division's race to Baghdad evidence that armored forces are quite capable of mobility without sacrificing firepower—or in the various hoppings of the 101st Airborne that the army has its own very effective airpower—the conservative forces in the army's upper ranks simply saw a chance to repay Rummy for his shabby treatment of army chief of staff Gen. Eric Shinseki. To say that an opportunity to heal the main breach in American civil-military relations was lost is an understatement. With Shinseki due to retire this summer and no clear replacement in sight, the problem may only get worse. The army is actually well along the transformation road, but still faces its greatest resistance from within its own ranks.

The Marine Corps, which never travels anywhere without a full complement of embedded reporters, performed admirably in conducting the supporting attack in the race toward Baghdad, although to look at the television coverage you'd think the Marines won the war. First Marine Division commander Maj. Gen. James N. Mattis lived up to his reputation as a very aggressive combat leader, at one point relieving a regimental commander for not acting with sufficient speed to secure an objective. Nonetheless, the Marines' jack-of-all-trades mentality, in many ways their greatest virtue, is also their greatest weakness. While the Marines' light armored vehicles appear to have given them great flexibility and mobility, their creaking Amphibious Assault Vehicles and Vietnam-era helicopter designs, though updated, are dinosaurs overdue for burial. Operation Iraqi Freedom was tailor-made for the capabilities represented by the V-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft; the Osprey would have provided a significant force in northern Iraq almost from the start without having to worry about the vagaries of Turkish domestic politics.

That the Navy has thus far been so modest, at least in the public relations contest, obscures what is perhaps the biggest technological and tactical improvement between the Desert Storm and Iraqi Freedom forces: the ability to distribute information widely and to strike precisely, in large numbers. In 1991, Navy strike fighters couldn't reach very far into Iraq and were forced to take greater risks because of the need to drop "dumb" bombs with non-stealthy airplanes. And distributing the "air tasking order"—the daily master plan coordinating the sorties of all the services (except the Marine Corps, whose pilots refuse to play with others)—to the aircraft carriers was a 72-hour process that involved flying a paper copy of the order from Central Command headquarters out to sea. Today, relatively modest investments in information systems and precision ordnance have allowed for far greater "jointness" among services. U.S. armed forces now fight very closely together rather than simply trying to stay out of each other's way.

The cumulative effect of all this was, as Gen. Myers put it, "Speed kills—the enemy." What was visible to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was also clear to a Marine corporal who observed that "the Iraqis could never keep up with our pace." For the first time since the Panama invasion of 1989, American technological and tactical advantages were employed with an intent to be audacious rather than cautious. The combat portion of Operation Iraqi Freedom was less a "campaign"—a series of distinct moves linked together—than a sustained, single battle. Even during the days of the sandstorms, ground unit movements and airstrikes

continued. There was no real "operational pause" outside Baghdad; once having seized the initiative, coalition forces simply tightened their choke hold on their Iraqi opponents.

It's also plausible that the final plan regained an element of strategic surprise—quite remarkable given the laborious diplomatic run-up to the war. One can imagine the discussions inside the Iraqi high command: "They will never attack with just four divisions. Their most capable ground unit couldn't deploy in Turkey and will take weeks to get in through Kuwait; we'll see them coming. And we know there will be an extended air campaign before the ground attack begins."

It is thus also misleading to ascribe the quick victory principally to the Iraqi military's weaknesses and the difficulties of decision-making under Saddam Hussein's command. The Iraqi war plan seems to have been designed to be "self-executing" in the event of "decapitation" strikes. The Saddam fedayeen and other stay-behinds who emerged to snipe at supply lines were in place well before the war began; they were surely following long-standing orders, a pre-planned reaction to the expected invasion. But other than the initial surprise of their resistance, they had no measurable effect on the outcome.

Finally, the Battle of Baghdad was a whimper and not a bang. While pockets of resistance—and gangs of thugs—remain as of this writing, the street-by-street slogging long predicted never materialized; Baghdad was neither Stalingrad nor Mogadishu. And Tikrit fell even faster. If there ever was an Iraqi plan for bleeding U.S. or British forces in urban combat, it could not cope either with the British care and precision in Basra or with the boldness of the American attack into Baghdad. Once the fight for the former Saddam International Airport was over, the city lay open.

What is the rest of the world to make of this overwhelming battlefield success? The first Gulf War made clear the likely outcome of a conventional war with the United States and its allies. This operation suggests that U.S. military forces are so superior that there may even be few unconventional alternatives. One such alternative, which al Qaeda embraces on its website, is that a guerrilla or terror war against the United States can be won. But Osama bin Laden's "weak horse" metaphor is looking less convincing. The last remaining succor for anti-American elements comes from the "lessons" of Vietnam. But in a clearer light, that war appears to be an anomaly, with conditions difficult to repeat: Soviet and Chinese sponsorship that immediately raised the specter of larger war if not Armageddon; Ho Chi Minh's willingness to destroy his nation in order to win it. And despite that, the United States was not easily defeated: 55,000 lost lives, decades of effort, and billions of dollars testify to, if nothing else, America's determination and will to win.

A second alternative is to acquire nuclear weapons as fast as possible. Iran has announced such an intention, and Russia is more than willing to help. But unless, like North Korea, you've already got the nukes (and unless you can launch a devastating conventional attack on a close American ally, such as South Korea), the process of acquisition runs the risk of U.S. preemption. While the Iraq war was not simply a test of the Bush preemption doctrine, the administration's recent rhetorical attack on Syria indicates how serious it is about the nexus of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism.

A third alternative for deterring America, and one that has received too little attention, is for rogue states (or terrorists) to attempt a de facto alliance with a great-power sponsor. The problem is that former great powers, like France, won't suffice; just ask Saddam. Realistically, the People's Republic of China is the only possible rallying point for the world's anti-American forces. Whether China wants or is prepared for that role is hard to say. Chinese grand strategy is premised upon a long build-up of its economy and military power before asserting an independent role as a counterweight to the United States and today's liberal global order. But Beijing has been flummoxed by U.S. moves in South and Central Asia; there are American troops loose in a lot of "-stan" countries, not to mention an expanding involvement in East Asia and Southwest Asia.

Thus it is difficult to overemphasize the profound military, strategic, and even political effects of the success of the "combat portion" of the Iraq war. Of course, it is commonplace to observe that the fighting may turn out to be the easy part. Even optimists—I count myself one—should keep a clear eye in judging the struggle ahead to give the Iraqi political experiment a secure environment in which to grow.

Yet we must also acknowledge that a good measure of any optimism about the future of Iraq, and indeed the greater Middle East, comes from the combat performance of the coalition forces over the past several months: Other than the United States, no other nation is capable of projecting such effective military power so far from home; other than Great Britain, no other nation is capable of playing a major complementary role; other than Australia, Denmark, Poland, and a few other allies, no other nations had the courage or strategic insight to make a useful contribution to the operation. America and its allies conquered an army and destroyed a regime that had repressed its people and destroyed its society; this required the most violent means and, at the same time, tender care for innocent Iraqis. Americans and their allies put themselves at risk—gave their own lives—to bring liberty to another nation.

Here endeth the lesson: We should "be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced," and "to the great task remaining before us . . . " ♦

Bashing Bashar

A plan of action.

BY MARC GINSBERG

ACCORDING TO pre-Islamic Alawi belief, people at first were stars in the world of light, but fell from celestial orbit through disobedience. Faithful Alawis believe they must be transformed seven times before returning to take their place among the stars. Syria's rookie Alawite president, Bashar Assad, son of the "Lion of Damascus," Hafez Assad, appears about to fall out of celestial orbit by provoking a showdown with the United States.

A genteel ophthalmologist turned absolute ruler by paternal fiat, Assad has jettisoned his late father's strategic imperative of maintaining correct ties with Washington despite the two countries' underlying differences. In recent weeks, U.S. and British soldiers have arrested at least six busloads of Syrian nationals attempting to enter Iraq to carry out attacks against coalition forces. And Assad has reportedly offered sanctuary to the remnants of Iraq's Baath party, who join the many other terrorists comfortably residing in Syria's safehouse of evil. But these are only the latest of Bashar's provocations.

Since coming to power in 2000, he has defied U.N. sanctions to provide Saddam Hussein with military equipment—lots of it. And now, U.S. officials are speaking on the record of Syria's secret production of weapons of mass destruction and its weaponization of missile batteries and rockets. Assad's spokesmen are busily fanning out to news outlets to deny these charges and denounce them as Israeli-inspired disinformation. We've bought this rug before.

Starting with Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's first visit to Damascus in December 1973, the elder Assad convinced Washington that without Syria's consent, there could be no peace in the Middle East. Assad strove, too, to be seen as the embodiment of the Pan-Arab nationalism that is the ideological underpinning of his ruling Baath party.

Bashar Assad

Getty / Salah Malkawi

In the 1980s, Syria did its best to undermine President Reagan's efforts to pacify Lebanon and promote Lebanese-Israeli accommodation. Although the degree of Syrian involvement was never proved, many in the United States believe that Syria was complicit in the October 1983 attack on the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut. Two months later, U.S. aircraft attacked Syrian anti-aircraft installations in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, and U.S. battleships shelled Syrian military positions elsewhere in Lebanon. In 1986, when a Jordanian who had attempted to smuggle a bomb on an Israeli plane in London confessed he had been trained and equipped by Syria, Washington imposed sanctions on Syria, citing its "continued support for international terrorism."

Nevertheless, in 1991, Hafez Assad made the decision to back the U.S.-led liberation of Kuwait from his fellow Baathist, Saddam Hussein. This was a "win/win" move for Assad. Despite Syria's egregious human rights record and repeated culpability in terrorist acts directed against Americans, successive U.S. secretaries of state trekked to Assad's study, there to listen to him extolling the virtues of Baath party leadership and the dangers of Israeli expansion.

Today, Bashar Assad's choice to side with Saddam seems like a "lose/lose" miscalculation. The callow Bashar's decision to throw in his lot with his father's principal antagonist against a formidable U.S.-led coalition raises a host of questions.

Did Bashar bank on Saddam's turning Iraq into a Mesopotamian Vietnam for U.S. forces, as Syria had turned Lebanon into an American quagmire in the 1980s? Was Syria's dirt-poor economy simply addicted to half-price Iraqi oil? Did the politically weak Bashar feel the need to burnish his Baath party credentials by playing to the region's anti-American bloc? Did he believe Washington would turn a blind eye to his misconduct as long as Syria continued to provide the CIA with intelligence about al Qaeda? It's hard to say, but the Bashar-Saddam rapprochement is a departure in Syrian-Iraqi relations.

For four decades, the Syrian and Iraqi Baathists have vied for the dubi-

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ous title of "true Baath party," and relations between the two countries have been marked by propaganda wars, assassinations, and subversion. The struggle reached its nadir in 1975 when a dispute over water rights could have led to war but for the mediation of Saudi Arabia. In the 1980s, during the Iran-Iraq war, Syria supplied weapons to Iran and cut off Iraq's only oil pipeline to the Mediterranean.

Today, Syria is the only country in the world that the United States brands a "state sponsor of terror," yet dignifies with normal diplomatic and economic relations. This incongruity stems from the view long held at the State Department that Syria is "indispensable" to resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. For over 30 years, Washington has refrained from pressing Syria to the wall in the hope that Damascus would support peace with Israel.

Now, U.S. forbearance may be running out. President Bush and Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld have launched a rhetorical "shock and awe" campaign against Syria, raising the spectre of armed conflict. Indeed, if Syria continues on its present path, it may qualify as Iraq's replacement in the Axis of Evil.

In case Damascus is hard of hearing, what the administration seeks is: an immediate end to support for jihadists and Hezbollah members entering Iraq from Syria; a full accounting and repatriation of senior Iraqi Baath party officials and members of Saddam's entourage who have been provided sanctuary in Syria; cessation of Syrian support for Hezbollah and expulsion of terrorists from Syrian soil; an agreement to end its weapons of mass destruction programs and accede to international nonproliferation accords; and the cleansing of the terror nests in the Bekaa Valley.

Shortly, Secretary of State Colin Powell will be heading to Damascus to pursue these objectives. There are several steps the administration should take to "shape the diplomatic battlefield" for his mission:

(1) The Bush administration should reverse itself and support passage of the Syria Accountability Act of 2002, which would impose economic sanctions on Syria for its continued support of terror and occupation of Lebanon.

(2) The Kirkuk pipeline, through which Syria illegally received over 200,000 barrels of Iraqi oil per day at half the world price, should be kept closed until Syria has complied with Washington's demands.

(3) The administration should invoke a provision of the 2001 USA Patriot Act that permits the United States to "confiscate" and "liquidate" property belonging to a foreign country that aids U.S. enemies during wartime. According to last week's *Wall Street Journal*, Syria has an estimated $133 million in assets in the United States, including $43 million in securities held by Syrian nationals and entities.

(4) Without so much as an additional executive order, the U.S. Office of Foreign Assets Control can prevent U.S. companies from continuing to do business with Damascus by imposing foreign assets controls on U.S. financial transfers to Syria.

(5) The United States should oppose the granting or extension of any credits or loans to Syria by multilateral institutions, including the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

(6) The United States should urge Turkey to cooperate in a regional effort to alter Syria's conduct by threatening to reduce the flow of water from Turkey into Syria's watershed.

(7) The United States should end its silence about Syria's nearly 30-year control of Lebanon. Nothing would embarrass Damascus more than a U.S.-sponsored resolution before the U.N. General Assembly calling for the cessation of Syria's colonial rule, backed up by similar efforts in other multilateral forums.

(8) During the upcoming G-8 summit in Evian, the administration should urge participants to join it in imposing trade sanctions against Syria in hopes of avoiding a military confrontation between the United States and Syria.

(9) Finally, it is time to sanitize the Bekaa Valley, which has become a refuge for every major terrorist organization not headquartered in Damascus. Last April, ABC News reported that a veritable predators' ball of terror organizations, including representatives of al Qaeda, attended a secret meeting in the Bekaa to plot against the United States—a meeting evidently condoned by Syria.

An outright attack on Syria should be a last resort, but our efforts to democratize Iraq will be greatly hindered if Syria persists in its meddling. Perhaps Bashar Assad will heed American warnings. If not, we may soon have a chance to see a shooting star falling over the skies of Damascus. ♦

Inmates and Imams

Who selects Muslim prison chaplains?

BY TERRY EASTLAND

FEDERAL COURTS UNDERSTAND the First Amendment ban on establishing religion to mean that government may not prefer one religion, or sect, over another. Why then has New York state, in treating the religious activities of Muslim inmates within its prisons, favored one Islamic sect over another—namely, Sunni Islam over Shia Islam?

That question is at the heart of a lawsuit filed against the state by four Shia Muslim prisoners at Fishkill Correctional Facility. The lawsuit challenges current policy under which the New York State Department of Correctional Services accommodates, as the attorney general explains in papers filed in the case, "religious activities with a significant inmate following." Islam, along with Catholicism, Protestantism, and Judaism, is one of those religions. The prison system has programs for each religion, but not, the attorney general emphasizes, for "different denominations within a religion." Thus, at a given prison, just as the Protestant chaplain ministers to both Baptists and Pentecostals, so, too, does the Muslim chaplain minister to Sunnis and Shia.

The Shia inmates don't believe a Sunni chaplain can serve them. Yet, the only Muslim chaplains the state has ever hired, more than 40 in all, are Sunni.

Why the state has hired only Sunnis isn't a mystery. Understandably, the prison administration has looked outside itself for advice on the chaplains it should hire. And in choosing Muslim chaplains, the department until recently relied on advice from the National Association of Muslim Chaplains, an advocacy group founded in the late 1970s by Warth Deen Umar, the same Sunni imam who, from 1975 until he retired in 2000, was the department's ministerial program coordinator and Islamic affairs coordinator. In that capacity, Umar, who is still the president of the National Association of Muslim Chaplains, trained and supervised all of the Muslim chaplains in New York's prisons. Glenn S. Goord, the state's prison commissioner since 1996, recently told the *Wall Street Journal*, "We kind of never knew how we got the people," meaning the Muslim chaplains. It's safe to say that the National Association of Muslim Chaplains, presided over by Umar, did know, and that it ensured the hiring of Sunnis only.

Umar told the *Journal* that "the Prophet said we are all Muslims, not Shiite, not Sunni, just Muslims." Yet the differences between the Sunnis and the Shia are ancient and deep. Upon Muhammad's death, Muslims struggled over who his successor should be, with one group (the majority Sunnis) looking to the community for leadership and the other (the minority Shiites) to members of the Prophet's family and their descendants. Blood was shed over the issue, and there have been other violent conflicts since then. Even today Shia Muslims mourn those from centuries past who were murdered and persecuted by Sunni Muslims. And even now Shia are regarded by some Sunnis as threats to the true faith. Indeed, Saudi Arabia by law prohibits Shia forms of worship.

The sharp and persisting differences between Sunni and Shia Islam constitute a compelling argument for establishing a separate program for each, with its own worship services. Indeed, it would appear that New York authorities could easily recognize the Sunni-Shia divide as having the same importance in Islam as the Protestant-Catholic divide does in Christianity—and justify separate programs for Sunni and Shia inmates by citing the ones they already maintain for Protestant and Catholic prisoners. As it is, prison authorities have worried (see the Fishkill litigation) that if they accommodate at a sectarian level for Islam, they will have to do so for the other religions, thus creating separate programs within Protestantism, say, for Baptists and Pentecostals and Lutherans. Yet here it must be said that among the religions the New York prison system currently accommodates, only Islam has sects that are so bitterly divided. There is no comparable strife within Protestantism, Catholicism, or Judaism. Surely the state could argue that accommodations within these other religions aren't needed because none has sects in such strong disagreement.

The New York case is about more than just issues of constitutional law and state prison policy. Indeed, of greater concern is what it suggests about the spread of Wahhabism in the United States. Wahhabism is a radical strain of Sunni Islam that arose in Saudi Arabia some 250 years ago and is today the kingdom's official religion. Named after its founder, Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, it is a literalist, legalistic, and punitive form of Islam. Not incidentally, it is stridently hostile toward Shia Islam.

Wahhabism, of course, is the religion of Osama bin Laden, and its adherents include the al Qaeda terrorists who attacked America on September 11. Less well known, perhaps, is that Wahhabism is an expansionist religion, a point emphasized in a friend-of-the-court brief filed in the Fishkill case by the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies. As the brief relates, well before September 11, thanks to the support of the Saudi monarchy, Wahhabism had become well ensconced in the United States. The Wahhabi influence could be seen in mosques, schools, foundations—and prisons. Indeed, the *Journal*'s exhaustive story, written by Paul M.

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Barrett and published on February 5, reports that Umar and some of his trainees indeed adopted "the fundamentalist offshoot of Sunni Islam known as Wahhabism." The Foundation for the Defense of Democracies flatly says that the religion the New York prison system has favored is Wahhabism.

How many prisoners in New York and other states are adherents of Wahhabism? How many in the federal system are? We don't know. What we do know is that those who adopt the sect tend not to be friendly to us, but hostile, and indeed prepared to give their lives to destroy us. A problem has grown up in our midst, and it's little comfort to note that, right now, it is contained within prison walls. ♦

O Brother, Where Art Thou?

Jeb Bush is riding high.

BY STEPHEN MOORE

Tallahassee, Florida

As I'm ushered into Jeb Bush's office in the state capitol, I'm struck by two things. First, how cramped it is in here: A midlevel bureaucrat in Washington would be insulted to have an office this skimpy. Second, how big Jeb is: He's a lot taller and broader than his more famous brother. This guy could post-up Bill Clinton. And in politics, height is a definite advantage. Anyway, as we sit with two of his aides talking about the state's fiscal crisis and the governor's political philosophy, our knees are practically knocking into each other for lack of space. Later it occurs to me that Jeb's cubbyhole office is symbolic of the state government he is hell-bent on trying to create in Florida: lean, functional, and without extravagance. "Our intention is to clear away all the governmental obstacles to creating prosperity in this state," he assures me. "That's our mission."

Although he is just beginning his second term after a lopsided victory over Democrat Bill McBride, the Florida governor has accomplished a lot of that mission already. The state budget has grown only modestly, despite a heavy influx of immigrants and tax refugees from the Northeast. Bush has cut business and property taxes by $1.8 billion—no meager achievement given that Florida is already a low-tax state and one of only nine without an income tax. The economy's performing well: Although Florida was hit especially hard by 9/11, thanks to its large tourist business, it is currently creating new jobs at a faster rate than any of the other 10 largest states. There have been non-economic victories too: Bush has launched one of the most successful and acclaimed school-choice projects in the country. And two years ago Bush torched the Florida trial lawyers by signing one of the most pro-consumer tort reform laws in the nation. No wonder he's rated one of the two best governors in America—Bill Owens of Colorado is the other—on the Cato Institute Fiscal Report Card.

In short, Jeb Bush is riding high in the saddle. He'd be sizzling hot even if he weren't the son and brother of presidents. Though Jeb loathes any such comparisons, his policy record is light-years more impressive than George W.'s was in Texas at a similar stage in his career. W. governed in Austin as if his administration were a basketball team clinging to a four-point lead in the fourth quarter. Jeb's whirlwind pace of gutsy policy initiatives in Tallahassee is more like a team that's down with two minutes to go. He wants big plays. "Jeb is first and foremost a policy entrepreneur," beams former Florida House speaker Tom Feeney, now a congressman. "Among all the governors, he's this generation's Tommy Thompson." Oh, and unlike his brother, Jeb doesn't boast about things like being "misunderestimated"—in English or in Spanish.

It's not for nothing that the third son of George and Barbara Bush is the odds-on favorite to be the Republican presidential nominee in 2008. And yet, Jeb remains something of a mystery. Which is what brings me to Tallahassee. I'm here to find out what America's fastest political comet actually believes. Is he a compassionate conservative or a Barry Goldwater anti-big government libertarian? When I ask him this very question via e-mail (his favorite form of communication), he answers, "I suppose I'm more of a compassionate conservative." But that's far from the whole story.

On the one hand, Jeb is a bully-pulpit social conservative. He's unapologetically pro-life. He talks incessantly about resurrecting and strengthening the family. The urgency of this message may well be related to his daughter's highly publicized drug problems and the pain this has brought to his own loved ones. And his rhetoric has become markedly more spiritual of late. Take this passage from his inaugural speech in January:

> While I am the one who takes this oath of office today, when we leave this place your responsibility is as sacred as mine: Through our example and our deeds we should strive to shape our society through kindness and caring. In our businesses we should give moms and dads time to be parents with chil-

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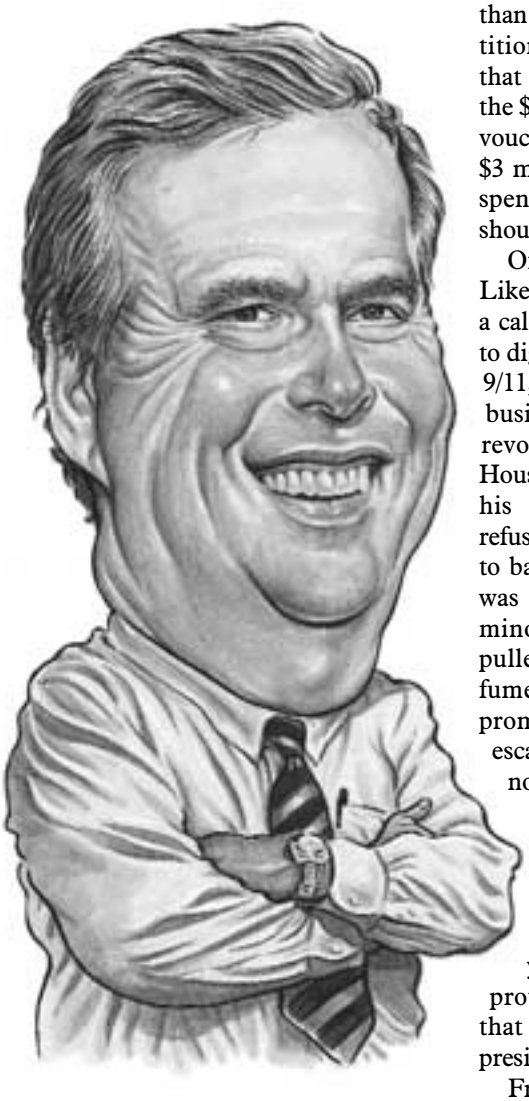
dren. In our hectic daily lives, we should fiercely guard a time for selflessly helping the most vulnerable and needy. In our private moments alone, we should reflect on our unearned gifts and rededicate our lives to those around us. In a thousand ways we can be more accepting, more giving, more compassionate.

There's that blasted word again, which has recently supplanted liberty as the GOP's guiding star. But even when he talks about strengthening families, the governor says he wants it done through a renewal of personal responsibility, and not by creating new bureaucracies. As if to punctuate this point, Jeb says his goal is to "embed in society a sense of caring that makes government less necessary."

But there is more than compassion here. During our conversation, Jeb volunteers wistfully: "You know something? With every passing day that I spend in this office, I'm more persuaded that big government programs are a false solution to our societal problems." I suspect he's just saying what he knows I want to hear; after all, he is a politician. But, in point of fact, this politician has the downsizing record to back up the enticing rhetoric.

Consider the state budget crisis. When I ask Jeb how he's handling the crunch, he seems almost insulted. "We don't have a budget deficit problem here." In fact, he boasts, "we're going full steam ahead with the next phase of our business tax cuts." Florida, it turns out, is one of only five states that isn't combating a hailstorm of red ink right now and one of only three that is cutting taxes this year. "Our tax cuts helped keep the budget in balance, by preventing a big build-up in spending during the boom years," he figures. Let New York and others raise taxes, he laughs. "It's to Florida's economic advantage." He's mystified by Republican governors who are raising taxes. "Do they really think that higher taxes will bring jobs back? I'd say they should be cutting taxes, like we are."

Jeb's got a knack for leading the legislature (which is dominated by the GOP, though Florida Senate Republicans have even less backbone than U.S. Senate Republicans) in the direction he wants it to go. Last year when the state Senate passed a huge sales tax hike, he not only fought the



Republican-sponsored proposal, he even walked the halls of the capitol to round up "No" votes. The bill failed 95-0 in the House.

Nothing defines Jeb's priorities better than his A-Plus school choice program, or what he calls his "supply-side education policy." This plan to rescue failing schools was enacted over the thunderous opposition of the Florida teachers' unions. (Jeb stubbornly refused to let any legislation pass until he got his bill.) The A-Plus program makes it possible for parents in school districts that receive an F grade in consecutive years to put their kids into private schools. Jeb eagerly flips out a chart from his briefcase. The numbers are staggering: In the first year of the program, there were 78 F schools. Now there are fewer than 20. "That's the impact of competition," Jeb proclaims. "I would bet that we've gotten more results out of the $300,000 that we've spent on these vouchers than most states have from $3 million in conventional education spending." He's probably right. W. should see these numbers.

Of course, the guy isn't perfect. Like all successful politicians, Jeb has a calculating side. Last year, in order to dig out of a revenue hole created by 9/11, he suspended a scheduled cut in business taxes, which led to a mini-revolt among right-wingers in the House. But his biggest snafu came in his first year in office, when he refused to back a civil rights initiative to ban racial preferences. His excuse was that he didn't want to alienate minority supporters. "Jeb really pulled the rug out from under us," fumes one conservative leader who promoted the initiative. For that escapade, he gained a reputation as not entirely dependable.

One thing, however, is certain. If Jeb's second term in Tallahassee is anywhere near as successful as his first, he could waltz into the White House five years from now, perhaps even protesting (as he often does now) that he's not really interested in the presidency.

Free-market conservatives could do a lot worse. At the end of his inaugural address in January, Governor Bush laid out this vision for the legislature: "There would be no greater tribute to our maturity as a society than if we can make these government buildings around us empty of workers; silent monuments to the time when government played a role larger than it deserved or could adequately fill."

As far as I'm concerned, Jeb can't get to Washington soon enough. ♦

Illustration by Drew Friedman

The U.N. vs. Adoption

Don't trust the international bureaucrats to be humanitarians.

BY LAWRENCE B. LINDSEY

IT'S BEEN SEVERAL MONTHS since I last thought about Benjamin and Elizabeth. It hit me as our older children were headed off to school. Elizabeth would have been in first grade in our local elementary school and Ben would be getting on the bus in September headed to kindergarten.

Had it not been for the United Nations, Benjamin and Elizabeth would have been my children. Now that the United States is considering letting the U.N. run social services in postwar Iraq, perhaps their story should be told.

Benjamin and Elizabeth (our legal names for them had we been successful in adopting them) were orphaned by the fighting in Kosovo. Although American and other allied forces manage the political and security arrangements in Kosovo, the United Nations is responsible for social and humanitarian services. When it comes to child welfare, this means UNICEF.

We have a close friend, a nurse, who was supplying medicine and equipment to the village hospitals and clinics in Kosovo back in 1998. She happened upon Ben and Elizabeth in an orphanage in Pristina, the capital. Most orphaned children in that conflict were adopted by family and other clan members, but there were thousands of such children, and some like Ben and Elizabeth had no close relatives. Others were the product of rapes committed by Serbian soldiers during their brutal occupation of the country, whose parentage made them outcasts and unadoptable.

Lawrence B. Lindsey, former director of the White House National Economic Council, is president and CEO of the Lindsey Group.

Our nurse friend approached the doctors in the orphanage and the local town leadership about these children. Given the children's bleak prospects, they were enthusiastic about adoption by an American couple, and helped petition the administrators of the orphanage.

The head of the orphanage, a French national in her late twenties, made her objections quite clear. "As long as I am in charge of this orphanage, no Americans will adopt any of the children here. These children will remain in country." The "in country" she preferred to America for these children was a poor, war-ravaged nation policed by foreign soldiers.

At first we thought this attitude simply reflected the prejudices of yet another of the left-wing European bureaucrats who staff most of the United Nations. So we began calling UNICEF officials in Geneva and New York, and writing letters to any seemingly appropriate official we could find on the U.N. website. As Americans we take for granted the process of accountability known as "petitioning for redress of grievances."

Never mind that ordinary Americans provide the overwhelming majority of non-governmental support for UNICEF. The "power of the purse" does not exist. Nor are basic notions like accountability and the democratic rights of ordinary people part of the U.N. bureaucracy's worldview. It took eight months and serious behind-the-scenes pressure for us to get our first, and only, response.

As it turns out, the French head of the orphanage was not merely enforcing her own anti-American prejudice. It is the official policy of UNICEF and the United Nations to permit no transnational adoptions wherever the U.N. has jurisdiction. This is the reality of U.N. "humanitarianism."

The ravages of Saddam Hussein and the Iraq war have doubtless left thousands of orphaned Iraqi children. Ideally, family members and other Iraqis able to support these children will take them in. But the realities of a poor, war-torn country mean that many will not find loving homes in Iraq. There are countless families in America and elsewhere who would be thrilled to adopt these orphans. These include Iraqi-American families. But they will not be allowed to if the United Nations has any say in the matter.

Things worked out well for our family. In December 2000 we adopted Thomas Lindsey on his first birthday. He was also a product of the war in Kosovo. But because his mother walked across the border to Macedonia while nine months pregnant, she and baby Thomas escaped the clutches of the U.N. bureaucrats. Thomas is now 3 and thriving. Last week when we were watching the news he said that he wanted to see President Bush again. When we asked why, he said, "He looks like he needs a hug."

Thomas was lucky; Benjamin and Elizabeth were not. Official United Nations policy needlessly condemns thousands of children to difficult futures in poor and war-ravaged countries. Some feel that it is necessary to give the U.N. a humanitarian role in postwar Iraq in order to rehabilitate that organization. Given the reality of its allegedly "humanitarian" policies, not to mention the widespread corruption and arrogance that accompanies its administration, it is fair to ask whether rehabilitation is possible.

Our government must decide whether geopolitical objectives require us to turn part of the administration of postwar Iraq over to the U.N. At a minimum, we should ask Prime Minister Blair and others who advocate this policy whether they really want to condemn thousands of Iraqi children to the same fate as Benjamin and Elizabeth. ♦

What Rod Paige Really Said

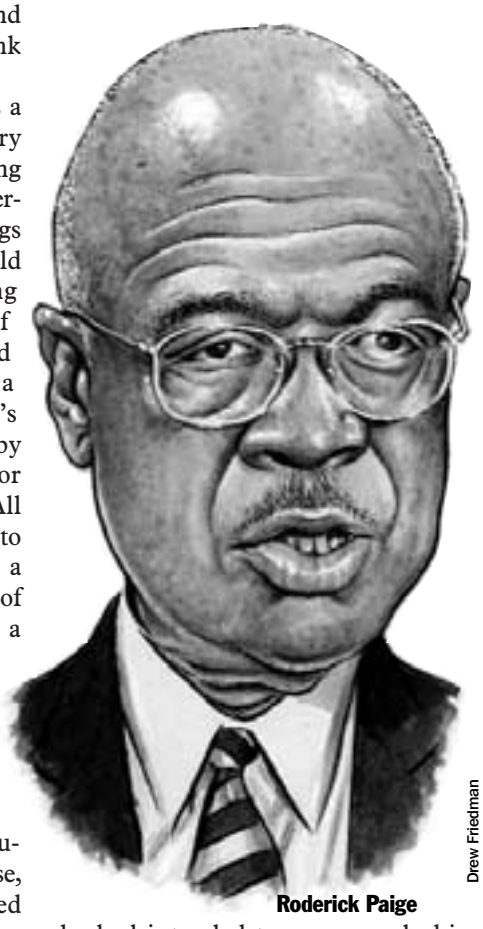
The trigger-happy media target the secretary of education. BY KENNETH L. WOODWARD

EDUCATION SECRETARY Roderick R. Paige, it appears, is the latest victim of gotcha journalism. In his private life, Paige is a deacon at Houston Baptist Church. Last week the Baptist Press, a denominational news service, asked him in an interview, "Given the choice between private and Christian, uh, or private and public universities, who do you think has the best deal?"

To which Paige replied: "That's a judgment, too, that would vary because each of them have real strong points and some of them have vulnerabilities, but you know, all things being equal, I'd prefer to have a child in a school where there's a strong appreciation for values, the kind of values that I think are associated with Christian communities." As a transcript later released by Paige's office showed, this was amended by the Baptist Press reporter, fired for changing Paige's words, to read: "All things being equal, I would prefer to have a child in a school that has a strong appreciation for the values of the Christian community, where a child is taught to have a strong faith."

Gotcha! Once the interview made its way into the *Washington Post* and other secular publications, Paige became the target of liberal assault. Civil rights groups, educational organizations and, of course, Democrats in Congress expressed their ire. Rep. Jerrold Nadler of New York circulated a letter among party colleagues demanding an apology "to the many American families whose faiths and educational choices your remarks have denigrated. If you are unprepared to make clear that this sort of religious bigotry has no place in the Department of Education, then we would urge you to resign."

At a press conference, Paige said he saw no reason to do either, adding that he had intended to convey only his personal preference to have a child in a college that emphasizes strong Christian values. But the liberal media saw a chance to play Toto, ripping away the curtain of educational impartiality to expose the Bush administration's hoaxing Wizard of Oz. A *Washington Post* editorial claimed the secretary's remarks revealed that the administration's support of school choice "is a cover for Christian school advocates who have given up on public education." Gotcha! A *New York Times* editorial the next day mongered the same fear. Paige's statements, said the *Times*, "reinforce suspicions that the administration is in sympathy with the religious right's drive to undermine the public school system in favor of a voucher-financed nationwide network of religious schools." Gotcha Deacon Paige!



Drew Friedman

Roderick Paige

Do Paige's critics really believe a pious Southern Baptist—or devout Muslim or observant Jew—cannot, should not, run the federal educational establishment if, as a parent, he would prefer to see his own kids in a religiously run school? The *Post* editorial at least acknowledged Paige's extraordinary achievements as superintendent of Houston's public schools. But neither the *Times* nor the *Post* seems to realize that thousands of public school teachers, principals, and superintendents send their own children to private and parochial schools for much the same reason—values—that Paige cites. So, one has to believe, do some of those who write editorials for our elite newspapers—at least those editorialists who are old enough to have school-age children.

The difference between religious and public schools lies less in values than in ethos: Elements of the ethos that makes Catholic schools work so well—things like discipline, esteem for students, personal attention, and equal academic demands on all students, not to mention on-site educational direction—can and should be duplicated in public schools. But there are other elements that only a religious education can provide. Study of the faith is one of them, but more important is the ethos of the school community and the explicitly religious formation it provides. A difficult virtue like forgiveness of enemies, for example, is more likely to impress students when it is presented as necessary to the formation of a Christ-like

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character, just as the compassion of the Buddha or the justice demanded by the Torah is best taught in a Buddhist or a Jewish school setting. This kind of formation cannot—should not—be part of the public school experience.

But the heavy-handed reaction to Secretary Paige is more than just the public education lobby acting on alert status. There is vincible ignorance at play here, as well as ideological bias. One has to ask where the editors of the *Times* get their information on parochial schools. No reporter at the *Times*, or at New York's tabs for that matter, is assigned to cover non-public schools. In Chicago or Cleveland or Dallas or Houston, the media recognize that Catholic, Lutheran, and other parochial school systems serve the public and are therefore news. But readers of the *Times* and those in Congress who echo its editorial views know more about the Muslim madrassas in Pakistan than they do the religious schools in New York or Washington. For more than 30 years I have been reading the *Times*'s annual Education supplement, and only once have I seen a story on what is one of the largest Catholic school systems in the country.

Running throughout the ongoing debates in American education is the assumption that public schools are, by their very public-ness, more diverse than religious schools. Many of them are. But check out almost any inner-city Catholic school and you will find that black Baptists, Hispanic Pentecostals, and even Muslims may constitute the majority of the students. When last I visited the Catholic grammar school that my relatives attended in Detroit, I found in the classroom a statue of the Madonna in one corner and an open Bible, an icon for the school's many black Baptist students, in another. A few years ago, the winner of the annual award for the best religion essay at Rice High School, a private Catholic school near Harlem, was a Muslim. But that story never made the *New York Times*.

Diversity, it appears, is in the eye of the beholder. In my own public school district, one of those Westchester County upper-income enclaves that promise "private school education at public school expense," students are far more uniform—in terms of family income, parental background, and cultural capital—than those I studied with in a Midwestern Jesuit high school half a century ago. My own experience has since been reinforced by a study of Catholic education published a decade ago by two scholars from Harvard University. They found that in terms of real diversity—namely socioeconomic background, including ethnic mix—and in terms of providing all students with a demanding curriculum, the Catholic rather than the public schools are the true heirs of the American "common school," as envisioned by public education's founding fathers. The irony, of course, is that the common school those fathers fashioned, with its mandatory reading of the King James Bible, was designed to make good Protestants out of everyone, especially immigrant Catholic children. Indeed, as late as the 1930s, when my mother-in-law got out of normal school, a Catholic like her could not get a job teaching in a public school in rural Iowa because of her religion. A further irony is that until the 1960s, when the Supreme Court banned prayer in public schools, there were few if any evangelical grade or high schools, and leaders of Paige's own Southern Baptist denomination routinely criticized Catholic schools for being divisive and un-American.

That kind of prejudice is long gone. But equally virulent forms of ignorance and bias still pollute our public discourse about how to educate our youth. As the overreaction to Secretary Paige indicates, any public official who expresses a personal preference for religious schools is still suspect in so-called liberal circles. Those who champion a state monopoly on education, it turns out, are the real enemies of diversity. ♦

The Redistribution of Honor

Winners and losers in the postwar era

By Joel Kotkin & Fred Siegel

Like all historically significant conflicts, the war in Iraq has produced its share of "winners" and "losers." Yet beyond the fates of individuals or organizations—Jacques Chirac, Jean Chrétien, Brent Scowcroft, the *New York Times*, the BBC, the National Organization for Women, the Congressional Black Caucus, and the United Nations make the losers cut with ease—what really will matter is how first 9/11 and now this war have redistributed our ideals of honor for the coming generation.

This shift in the moral hierarchy is far more fundamental than party politics. For the first time since the era of civil rights and Vietnam, when racism and a dishonestly defined war undermined the authority of our institutions, the fundamental concepts of who is to be admired, and who is not, are being shaken and reshaped.

Following the earthquake of the 1960s, honor and glory in America tended to go to "victims"—racial, economic, and sexual—whose rights had been abused. Anxious to hold on to that alignment, an angry Al Sharpton speaking in the wake of 9/11 insisted that "we don't owe America anything; America owes us." Taking up Sharpton's sentiments, a majority of the Congressional Black Caucus last month either voted against or abstained on a House resolution in support not of the war, but of our troops.

Today, in a rediscovery of courage, a virtue long disdained by feminists, the most honored are the people who give of themselves—the police officers, firefighters, and soldiers, whatever their gender or race, we ask to defend us against criminals, terrorists, and thugs. The Todd Beamers and Jessica Lynchs are the ones who make us proud, and unite us, as Americans.

Part of what's driving the change is that the United States, which has been famously indifferent to the past, has acquired a keen sense of recent history. Since 9/11, we've been paying attention in the classroom of world events, and learning lessons that are quite different from what many of our top religious, intellectual, and media leaders had been preaching. Rather than reigning as the source of evil in the world, it is the United States that has taken the lead in bringing down tyrannies in Serbia, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

In the conflict between the freeze-dried radicals for whom it is always 1968 and those who see in today's crises a repetition of earlier battles—against slavery, Nazism, and communism—it is the latter who have been vindicated by events. But the media and political elites who came of age in the anti-American, anti-capitalist era of the 1960s have been slow to grasp that Vietnam turns out to have been the exception, not the norm.

This explains why, after 9/11 and the overthrow of Saddam, the dishonored elites have continued, in Seneca's phrase, to be "resolute in their madness." Nowhere is this more obvious than in the nation's religious establishment. With few exceptions, our mainstream church leaders vehemently opposed the war. The pope warned of dire results. The National Council of Churches predicted "tremendous loss of lives," "years of chaos and suffering," and an "increase in acts of terrorism." Muslim leaders—except perhaps a few in Iraq and Kuwait—saw little more than another attack by infidel "crusaders," working in tandem, of course, with the worldwide Jewish conspiracy.

Thus we have found mainstream religious figures like Bob Edgar, who moved seamlessly from being a liberal congressman to leading the National Council of Churches, at antiwar rallies. There they were joined by those who advocate the suicide bombings by children of other children, allies to regimes that brook no faith but their own, as well as the "pagan" nation of lightly churched areas such as San Francisco or the west side of Manhattan.

The hierarchies of established Protestant faiths—from the United Methodists to the Mennonites, the United Church of Christ, the Episcopalians, and the Presbyteri-

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ans—were virtually unanimous in their unambiguous hostility to the war. Most of the clergy, notes Dr. Wade Clark Roof, were products of the "ecumenical education" of the '60s and early '70s, which embraced a theology of social action and liberation, often to the exclusion of traditional morality. "This," says Roof, has "created a gap between what the religious leaders say and what the people in the congregations think" that's been widening steadily since the late '60s, when "we started to see the decline of mainstream Protestantism."

R. Scott Appleby of Notre Dame, an opponent of the war, sees a similar trend among Catholics, where most congregants—including the swelling number of Latino parishioners—support the war, as do, according to the polls, most churchgoing Americans. Combined with the continuing fallout from the sexual abuse scandals, this is likely to give credence to the more conservative Catholic lay groups and intellectuals, like Michael Novak, whose views on the war seem far more grounded in contemporary reality than those of the clerical elites.

The other big religious winners will be others who have been favorable to the war—fundamentalist and evangelical Christians, conservative-leaning Jews, even anti-Saddam Shia clerics. Such groups had already been gaining ground in the battle for the religious hearts and minds of Americans; their embrace of the current realities, as opposed to '60s flashbacks, guarantees that their voices, and ideas, will be more valued in the years ahead.

As academics continue to suffer popular ridicule, a Prague Spring may come to campuses.

A similar redistribution of honor may even be in the offing in the academy, where antiwar sentiment among professors seemed to many like a splendid opportunity for a second adolescence. Over the last few months, it was the university faculties—with their Saudi-funded Arab study centers, Arabized left-wing professors, black nationalist enclaves, and tenured radicals—who fomented and marched. But the student army never materialized. Campuses never closed, and for the most part the students, even at places like Berkeley, Harvard, and Yale, basically went about their business. A poll conducted by the *Yale Daily News* found about half of students supported the war. Polls showed that most young people supported the war, and even before the campaign vindicated such views, two-thirds expressed strong confidence in our military leadership.

The funhouse of the postmodern academics was built around the two closely related themes of postmodernism and multiculturalism. Together they displaced the idea of truth and its cousin, empirical evidence, with the notion of "narrativity." All the world was simply words. There was no reality, just a series of competing stories all of which were mere social constructs and none of which was more correct than any other. In political terms, the campus postmodernists identified with the pre-modern rebels against modernity in the Arab world. But with the war in Iraq, those on campuses who, like Al Jazeera, believed "Baghdad Bob's" account of events discovered that lo and behold there is such a thing as an empirically grounded reality.

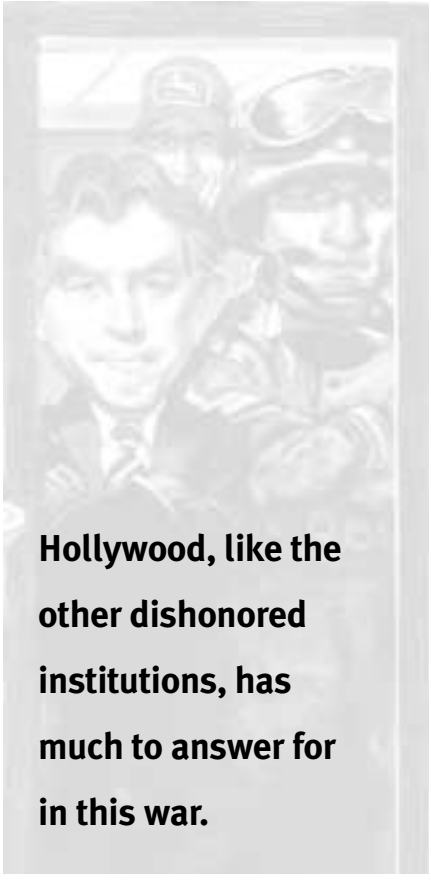
Given tenure and the understandable reluctance of bright kids to get caught up in the PC maw of graduate school, the universities will be slow to change. But as students increasingly challenge the superannuated ideas of their aging professors and academics continue to be subject to popular ridicule as "shagadelic" characters—like Saddam and his love-nest—out of an Austin Powers movie, we may someday see the signs of a Prague Spring on the campuses.

Along with the academics and the clerics, the third group of big-time losers are the prestige media. The mission of the media is to provide accurate information. Yet for much of the war—indeed until the army and Marines broke into Baghdad—the *New York Times* was often as full of misinformation as the Iraqi minister of information. And not nearly as funny.

It was indeed painful to see that despite rapid advances through the desert and the remarkable steps to avoid civilian casualties, the BBC and CNN tried to portray the invasion as a disaster in the making, or an "acid flashback to Vietnam," as the unintentionally amusing Maureen Dowd put it. A typical experience was to hear left-wing dinosaur and onetime North Korea apologist

Robert Scheer tell us on National Public Radio that immigrants—widely honored for their service—had served as "cannon fodder" for an imperial war. We wonder how well his comments would play, say, on Whittier Boulevard in Latino East L.A., where there are more American flags flying than in Santa Monica. Then again, you can say the same about Baghdad. For people like Scheer, America's triumph, and the liberation of Iraq, was all about the agony of defeat, notably theirs. Accuracy and honor, if sometimes marred by too much naked boosterism, go to Fox and MSNBC and bloggers like Andrew Sullivan for whom the war enhanced both reputation and ratings.

No catalogue of dishonor is complete without including Hollywood, an ephemeral constituency that includes not only Malibu and Bel-Air, but the tonier parts of Manhattan and Connecticut as well. When our troops shipped out, it wasn't exactly like the old days, with Bob Hope in their corner. Instead there was Susan Sarandon, Sean Penn, Michael Moore, and Barbra Streisand, who allowed their hatred for George Bush to become de facto support for keeping Saddam in power. Opposing the war even took time from their second favorite activity, supporting generalissimo Castro, who could always retire as a Hollywood executive.



Hollywood, like the other dishonored institutions, has much to answer for in this war.

Hollywood, like the other dishonored institutions, has much to answer for in this war (not to mention much before). Where were the famous Hollywood conservatives or the hairy chested heroes who play military supermen in the films? Not offering to take the next C-17 out to Kuwait to entertain the troops, and perhaps a bit scared of being on the reverse blacklist of the limousine leftists who control the likes of Miramax and Dreamworks.

Finally, there has also been a geographic redistribution of honor. You can divide Americans increasingly by their attitudes towards Europe. The academic and media elites tend to see Europe as the enlightened home of a more urbane civilization. Religious leaders relate favorably to the simplistic pacifism and inherent anti-Americanism that reigns among continental leaders. Europe's long-term economic stagnation, its widespread anti-Semitism, its inability, unlike America, to absorb different peoples and cultures, its financial support for Palestinian terror—all of this is of course roundly ignored.

For most Americans, the war revealed that the Europeans—notably the Belgians and the French—are reliably people without honor. But not all Europe has failed in American eyes. We honor most of all the British, showing themselves to be our true cousins, as well as those along the continental periphery, from Spain to Lithuania, who supported the cause of bringing down a hideous dictator.

America's internal geography of honor also was altered. Clearly, the heartland and the South, where support for the war was strong, have seen their vision of a just and powerful America carried out. At the same time, the denizens of the Northwestern druid belt, from Santa Cruz to Seattle—which became the hotbed of antiwar sentiment—emerge as losers. San Francisco during the war became Baghdad by the Bay for more reasons than one. Yet, despite the antiwar unanimity of the local media, academic, clerical, and political classes, in the recent Field poll 63 percent of the Bay Area at large supported the war.

The war has served to deepen trends already in place. The left, on the losing side of every major foreign policy debate of the past quarter century, is increasingly retreating into snobbery and conspiracy theories about neocon plots. At Columbia University, Hamid Dabashi, Kevorkian professor of Iranian studies, told the participants in a teach-in/antiwar rally that they were the "'A' students, who think for themselves," in contrast to the "'C' students with their stupid fingers on the trigger." History will not be kind when it comes to grading the professor.

In the 1960s, under the weight of the Vietnam debacle and a government that lied to its citizens, the margins moved into the center of American life. Today with a military that is more open and honest than the elites who disdain it, the margins are marginal again. The American center has held. ♦

The Collapse of the Dream Palaces

Mass destruction of mistaken ideas

By David Brooks

George Orwell was a genuinely modest man. But he knew he had a talent for facing unpleasant facts. That doesn't seem at first glance like much of a gift. But when one looks around the world, one quickly sees how rare it is. Most people nurture the facts that confirm their worldview and ignore or marginalize the ones that don't, unable to achieve enough emotional detachment from their own political passions to see the world as it really is.

Now that the war in Iraq is over, we'll find out how many people around the world are capable of facing unpleasant facts. For the events of recent months confirm that millions of human beings are living in dream palaces, to use Fouad Ajami's phrase. They are living with versions of reality that simply do not comport with the way things are. They circulate and recirculate conspiracy theories, myths, and allegations with little regard for whether or not these fantasies are true. And the events of the past month have exposed them as the falsehoods they are.

¶ *There is first the dream palace of the Arabists.* In this dream palace, it is always the twelfth century, and every Western incursion into the Middle East is a Crusade. The Americans are always invaders and occupiers. In this dream palace, any Arab who hates America is a defender of Arab honor, so Osama bin Laden becomes an Arab Joe Louis, and Saddam Hussein, who probably killed more Muslims than any other person in the history of the world, becomes the champion of the Muslim cause.

In this dream palace, the problems of the Arab world are never the Arabs' fault. It is always the Jews, the Zionists, the Americans, and the imperialists who are to blame. This palace reeks of conspiracies—of Israelis who blew up the World Trade Center, of Jews who put the blood of Muslim children in their pastries, of Americans who fake images of Iraqis celebrating in Baghdad in order to fool the world. In this palace, Mohammed Saeed al-Sahaf, the Iraqi information minister, was taken seriously because he told the Arabists what they wanted to hear.

In this palace, old men really do shoot down Apache helicopters with AK-47s. Saddam's torture chambers are invisible, the hundreds of thousands of Iraqis he murdered go unmentioned, the fedayeen who shot their own refugees are ignored, but every civilian casualty caused by an American bomb is displayed in all its bloody agony. In this dream palace, rage is always the proper emotion, victimhood the pleasure most indulged. Other people—Iraqis, Palestinians, suicide bombers—are always called upon to fight the infidels to the death so that the satellite TV-watching Arabists, safe in their living rooms, can have something to cheer about.

¶ *Then there is the dream palace of the Europeans.* In this palace, America is a bigger threat to world peace than Saddam Hussein. America is the land of rotting cities, the electric chair, serial killers, gun-crazed hunters, shallow materialists, religious nuts, savage capitalists, the all-powerful Jewish lobby, the oil lobby, the military-industrial complex, and bloodthirsty cowboy-presidents.

In this dream palace, the Hollywood clichés are taken to be real. George Bush really is Rambo, Clint Eastwood, and John Wayne rolled into one. American life really is *NYPD Blue* and *Baywatch*. In this dream palace, Oliver Stone is as trustworthy as the *Washington Post*, Michael Moore accurately depicts the American soul, *Dr. Strangelove* is a textbook of American government, and Noam Chomsky tells it like it is.

In the European dream palace, Americans are terminally naive, filled with crazy notions like the belief that Arabs are capable of democracy. In this vision of reality, Americans are at once childish, selfish, and trigger-happy, but Arabs live just this side of savagery. Any action that might rile them will cause the Arab street to explode, and will lead to a thousand more bin Ladens. In this dream palace, history is tragic, and teaches us it is always prudent to do nothing—to do nothing about Bosnia, to do

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nothing about Kosovo, to do nothing about Rwanda, to do nothing about the slow-motion holocaust unleashed in Iraq by Saddam.

¶ *Finally, there is the dream palace of the American Bush haters.* In this dream palace, there is so much contempt for Bush that none is left over for Saddam or for tyranny. Whatever the question, the answer is that Bush and his cronies are evil. What to do about Iraq? Bush is evil. What to do about the economy? Bush is venal. What to do about North Korea? Bush is a hypocrite.

In this dream palace, Bush, Cheney, and a junta of corporate oligarchs stole the presidential election, then declared war on Iraq to seize its oil and hand out the spoils to Halliburton and Bechtel. In this dream palace, the warmongering Likudniks in the administration sit around dreaming of conquests in Syria, Iran, and beyond. In this dream palace, the boy genius Karl Rove hatches schemes to use the Confederate flag issue to win more elections, John Ashcroft wages holy war on American liberties, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, and his cabal of neoconservatives long for global empire. In this dream palace, every story of Republican villainy is believed, and all the windows are shuttered with hate.

These dream palaces have taken a beating over the past month. As the scientists would say, they are conceptual models that failed to predict events. But as we try to understand the political and cultural importance of the war in Iraq, the question is this: Will they crumble under the weight of undeniable facts? Will the illusions fall, and the political landscape change?

My first guess is that the dream palace of the Arabists will temporarily sag. As happened after the Six Day War back in 1967, the newspapers and TV networks that depicted glorious Arab victories and failed to prepare their audiences for the crushing defeat that came will see their credibility suffer. The radicals who preach eternal war with the infidel will seem stale, architects of a failed vision. As happened after Desert Storm, the Arabs who preach reform and modernization will begin to seem more attractive. There will be some restlessness, some searching for a fresh start and a different way, and thus a window of opportunity will open for democratization and peace, but that opening will have a termination date. The window will close if, a year or two hence, millions of Arabs continue to feel humiliated by their region's backwardness. They will go looking again for conspiracy theories, victimhood, and rage.

My second guess is that Europeans will not shake off their clichéd image of America. The stereotypes are entrenched too deeply. But official Europe will go through one of its periodic phases of gloomy and self-lacerating introspection. There will be laments about European impotence, continental divisions, the need to build a common European alternative. But this self-criticism will not spark any fundamental change, just summits, conferences, and books.

My third guess is that the Bush haters will grow more vociferous as their numbers shrink. Even progress in Iraq will not dampen their anger, because as many people have noted, hatred of Bush and his corporate cronies is all that is left of their leftism. And this hatred is tribal, not ideological. And so they will still have their rallies, their alternative weeklies, and their Gore Vidal polemics. They will still have a huge influence over the Democratic party, perhaps even determining its next presidential nominee. But they will seem increasingly unattractive to most moderate and even many normally Democratic voters who never really adopted outrage as their dominant public emotion.

In other words, there will be no magic "Aha!" moment that brings the dream palaces down. Even if Saddam's remains are found, even if weapons of mass destruction are displayed, even if Iraq starts to move along a winding, muddled path toward normalcy, no day will come when the enemies of this endeavor turn around and say, "We were wrong. Bush was right." They will just extend their forebodings into a more distant future. Nevertheless, the frame of the debate will shift. The war's opponents will lose self-confidence and vitality. And they will backtrack. They will claim that they always accepted certain realities, which, in fact, they rejected only months ago.

But there is another, larger group of people whose worldviews will be permanently altered by the war in Iraq. Members of this group were not firm opponents of the war. Indeed, they were mild supporters, or they were ambivalent. They were members of the vast, nervous American majority that swung behind the president as the fighting commenced.

These people do not have foreign policy categories deeply entrenched in their brains. They don't see themselves as hawks or doves, realists or Wilsonians. They don't see each looming conflict either through the prism of Vietnam, as many peaceniks do, or through the prism of the 1930s and the Cold War, as many conservatives do. They don't attract any press coverage or much attention, because they seldom take a bold stand either way. Their foreign policy instincts are unformed. But they are the quiet people who swing elections.

What lessons will they draw from the events of the past month? How will the fall of Saddam affect their voting patterns, their approach to the next global crisis? One way to think about this is to conduct a thought experi-

ment. Invent a representative 20-year-old, Joey Tabula-Rasa, and try to imagine how he would have perceived the events of the past month.

Joey doesn't know much about history; he was born in 1983 and was only 6 when the Berlin Wall fell. He really has no firm idea of what labels like liberal and conservative mean. But now he is in college, and he's been glued to the cable coverage of the war and is ready to form some opinions. Over the past months, certain facts and characters have entered his consciousness, like characters in a play he is seeing for the first time.

The first character is America itself. He sees that his country is an incredibly effective colossus that can drop bombs onto pinpoints, destroy enemies that aren't even aware they are under attack. He sees a ruling establishment that can conduct wars with incredible competence and skill. He sees a federal government that can perform its primary task—protecting the American people—magnificently.

These are obviously not the things Joey would have seen if he had come of age in 1972, and his mentality is likely to be radically different from that of many people of the sixties generation. He is likely to feel confident about American power. He is likely to assume that when America projects its might, it is not only great, but good. Its pilots fly low, at some risk to themselves, to reduce civilian casualties. Teams of lawyers vet bombing targets to minimize unnecessary damage. Efforts are made to spare enemy soldiers who don't want to fight. The military, moreover, is fundamentally open to the press, allowing embedded reporters to wander amidst the troops. The ruling class is reasonably candid about the war's progress. The anonymous people in the corridors of power basically seem to know what they are doing.

The American system of government, moreover, is clearly the best system. In Joey's eyes, the United Nations is a fractious debating society. The European Union is split. The French are insufferable, the Germans both hostile and pacifist. The Arab ruling class is treacherous. Billions of people around the world seem to hate us, and while Joey is aware that there are some reasons to be suspicious of the United States, he resents the way so many people are over the top in their resentment, fury, and dislike. In short, Joey does not look around and assume that the world is moving toward some world government or global unity. When the chips are down, there are very few nations you can trust. Joey is both more trusting of America, and more suspicious of the world, than he would have been if he had formed his worldview in the 1990s.

The second great character on Joey's mind is the American soldier. When Joey thinks of youthful idealism, he doesn't think of college students protesting in the streets, he thinks of young soldiers risking their lives to liberate a people. These are the men and women Joey saw interviewed by the dozen on TV. They seemed to enjoy being in the military. They seemed to believe in their mission. They seemed to be involved in something large and noble even at a young age.

People who get to do the most exciting things are not members of the meritocratic elite.

In Joey's eyes, the people who get to do the most exciting things are not members of the meritocratic elite—Harvard and Stanford alums who start software companies. They are the regular men and women of the armed forces, or, as he remembers from the days after 9/11, they are firemen and cops. They are people without prestigious degrees and high income prospects.

Joey naturally feels that while those soldiers are liberating a country and talking about duty and honor, all he is doing is preparing for business school. That doesn't mean he necessarily wants to enlist, but he is aware that there is something lacking in his pampered private life. He also sees, in the example the soldiers set, that discipline, neatness, professionalism, and openly expressed patriotism are kind of cool.

The third character Joey sees is the terrorist. He sees the people who blew up the World Trade Center. In Iraq, people like that piled into pickups and suicidally attacked tanks. They wore those black fedayeen gowns. In Israel, they strap bombs to their waists and blow up buses. Joey is aware that there are a lot of people, especially in the Arab world, who are just batshit crazy. There is no reasoning with these people. They understand only force, and they must be crushed.

Joey sees that some regimes around the world are sadistic and evil. They torture and mutilate their own people. They ignore the basic rules of warfare and civilization.

Conflict with these people is inevitable. They lurk in the dark corners of the globe, and for some reason they think they should take out their problems on us. You always have to be on guard, because there really is evil about.

When Joey looks at the talking heads on TV, he begins to form judgments about this country's political divides. First, he sees the broad majority of people who support the war, who, it seems to him, deserve to be called the progressives. These people talk optimistically of spreading democracy and creating a new Middle East. They have a very confident approach to what America can achieve in the world. People in this political movement include Christopher Hitchens, Dennis Miller, Paul Wolfowitz, Joseph Lieberman, John McCain, Richard Holbrooke, Charles Krauthammer, the staff of Fox News, Bernard Lewis, and George Bush.

These people tend to endorse progressive interventionism, not only in Iraq, but in places like Kosovo. They use the explicitly moral language of good and evil. Joey is a little nervous that they are not realistic about what can actually be achieved in this messy world. He's afraid they might bite off more than they can chew. But he gives them credit for their idealism, their hope, their grand vision.

The second group Joey sees he calls the conservatives. These people are far more skeptical of the war and grand endeavors of that sort. They emphasize all the things that could go wrong. They seem more prudent and less idealistic or visionary. They were not necessarily implacably opposed to the effort in Iraq, but they thought it imprudent. People in the conservative camp include Brent Scowcroft, Joe Klein, the State Department, John Kerry, Chris Matthews, Robert Novak, and most of the press corps.

When Joey listens to these conservatives, he thinks they raise some valid concerns. They serve as a useful brake on the progressives, but they are not exactly inspiring or hopeful, and their prognostications on Iraq proved more wrong than right.

The final group Joey sees on the political landscape are the marchers. These people are always in the streets with their banners and puppets. They march against the IMF and World Bank one day, and against whatever war happens to be going on the next. Joey is not sure what these people are for. They don't seem to have any alternative to globalization. They don't seem to know how to deal with the Taliban or Saddam. They just march against. Joey figures it must be part of their personality.

Joey knows that this is what people did in the 1960s, and he regards the marchers as vaguely archaic. He knows that they tend to come from Hollywood and academia. Joey is not hostile to those worlds. He loves movies and likes many of his professors. He just senses that they are cloistered worlds, removed from day-to-day reality, and he doesn't plan on spending his life there. Marching for peace is something people in those worlds do, just as Mormons devote a few years of their lives to missionary work, or Jews keep kosher. It does not occur to Joey to enter the subculture of the protesters, and what they say is not likely to affect him one way or another.

Who is progressive, who is conservative, who is reactionary—these categories have all changed.

Joey likes to think of himself as fundamentally independent. He looks at the people living in their dream palaces—the Arabists, the European elites, the Bush haters—and he knows he doesn't want to be like them. He doesn't want to be so zealous and detached from reality. He's not even into joining political movements at home. But he is less independent than he thinks. He has started to acquire certain assumptions over the past months, which will shape his thinking in years to come. As a rule, these assumptions are the exact opposite of the assumptions he would have formed if he had been watching the Vietnam war unfold. His politics will be radically different from those of the Vietnam generation.

Moreover, new categories are crystallizing in his mind. These categories—who is progressive, who is conservative, who is reactionary—do not comport with the categories in the minds of people who came of age during the civil rights era, or even the Cold War.

Joey isn't one of a kind. There are millions of Joeys, and variations on Joey. Inevitably, then, in ways subtle and profound, the events of the past month will shape our politics for the rest of our lives. ♦

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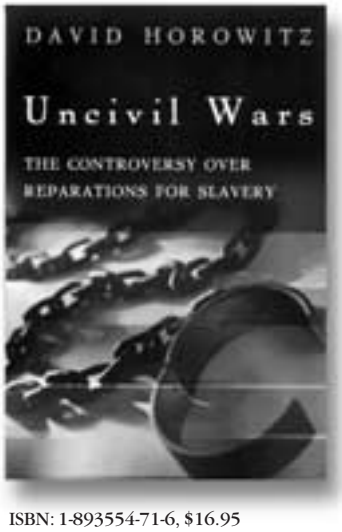

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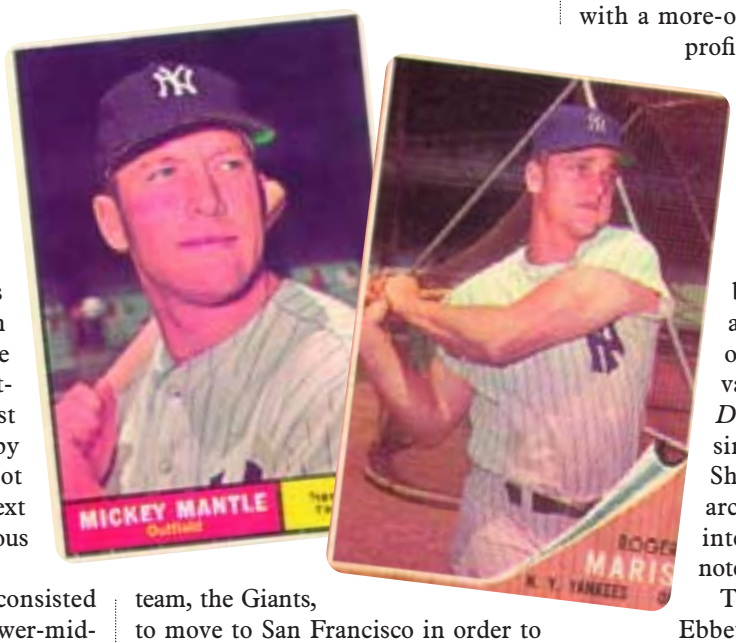
When Baseball Was Baseball

The boys of summer vs. the Bronx bombers

By Matthew Berke

They were called the Dodgers because in Brooklyn, where the team began, residents had to dodge the borough's numerous trolley cars, and their nickname, "da bums," referred to their ineptitude during the 1920s and 1930s. ("Ya bums, ya!" a true son of Brooklyn was heard to say, and the label stuck.) But in the years immediately before World War II, and in the decade after, the Dodgers became the greatest team in the National League—the greatest, but prone to heartbreak as they repeatedly lost pennants and World Series by the narrowest of margins. Not for nothing was "Wait till next year!" the motto of the raucous crowd in tiny Ebbets Field.



Brooklyn in those days consisted mainly of blue-collar and lower-middle-class neighborhoods where kids played stickball in the streets and people socialized on front stoops or over clotheslines. Brooklynites discussed Dodger baseball on every street corner and in every saloon and candy store. And there was real intimacy between the public and the players, most of whom lived in the borough—not in the smallest row houses or red brick apartments beneath clattering El trains, perhaps, but in bungalows just a cut or two above. In 1947 the Dodgers broke baseball's infamous color line, bringing up Jackie Robinson as the first African American to play in the major leagues. Robinson, along with shortstop Pee Wee Reese, formed the nucleus of a team that finally won the World Series in 1955.

Team owner Walter O'Malley moved the club to Los Angeles after the 1957 season—and thereby was born the myth of the Brooklyn Dodgers, a myth of paradise lost. (He also persuaded New York's other National League team, the Giants, to move to San Francisco in order to recreate their rivalry on the West Coast.) With the same intensity that Brooklyn had loved its team, it hated the man who had absconded with the borough's great unifying institution. Some years ago, in *Bums: An Oral History of the Brooklyn Dodgers*, Peter Golenbock told the now-legendary story of Pete Hamill and Jack Newfield, Brooklyn-born newspaper writers, having dinner one night and trying to decide who were the three worst men in history. Each had the same list: Hitler, Stalin, and Walter O'Malley.

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by Bill Madden
Warner, 453 pp., $24.95

Now, in *The Last Good Season*, Michael Shapiro stakes out a revisionist position: O'Malley was not Hitler or Stalin, but simply a businessman with a more-or-less ordinary lust for profit and power. Whatever O'Malley's limitations, Shapiro contends, he was a devoted family man and a New Yorker who would have kept the Dodgers in Brooklyn but for the indifference and intransigence of city officials. (Neil J. Sullivan, in his 1987 *The Dodgers Move West*, made similar arguments, but Shapiro has added new archival materials and interviews; no source notes, though.)

The situation was this: Ebbets Field, in Brooklyn's Flatbush section, was old and crumbling, and the area was suffering from urban decay, crime, and white flight. The Dodgers' fan base, now in Long Island, couldn't find adequate parking near the ballpark, so people watched the games on television. Fan attendance plummeted despite the team's success.

O'Malley needed an attractive and accessible part of Brooklyn for his dream stadium, a flashy modernistic structure based on Buckminster Fuller's geodesic dome, with a translucent ceiling and real grass. But he also needed public support in the form of roads, ramps, parking, and condemnation of property. The man who might have provided those necessities—and, for Shapiro, the real "bad guy in this story"—is Robert Moses, the parks commissioner, who exercised near-dictatorial control over what was built and demolished in the city. Moses was a genius but also an elitist who didn't

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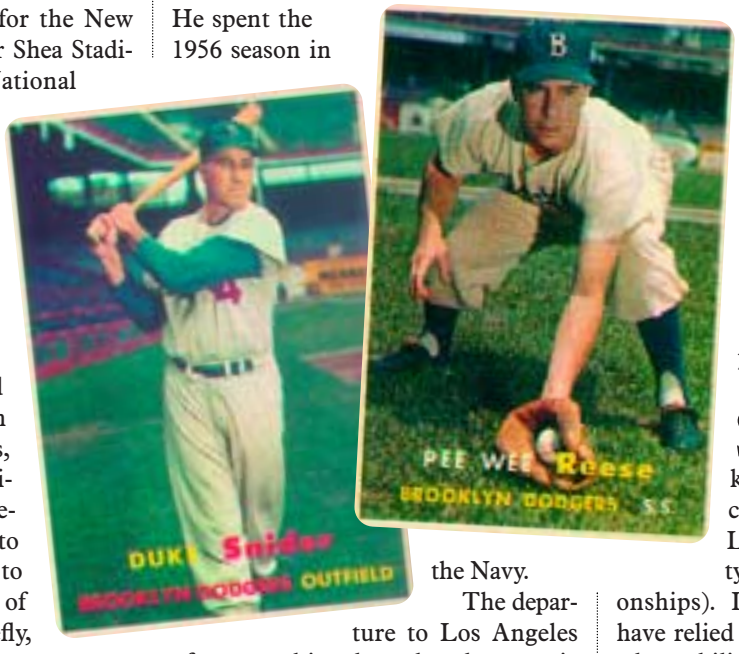
understand the human elements that make a modern city livable. He routinely destroyed thriving neighborhoods by running highways through them, and he had no appreciation for baseball as part of the fabric of life in New York.

Almost to the end, O'Malley thought he would be able to build his new stadium, according to Shapiro, and Moses strung him along even though he had no intention of relocating the Dodgers to prime real estate in Brooklyn. Moses's idea was for the city to build, and then rent to the Dodgers, a bland, multipurpose stadium in the Flushing Meadows section of Queens—basically, the middle of nowhere and certainly not Brooklyn. (In the 1960s this site would be used for the New York World's Fair and for Shea Stadium, home to a new National League team, the Mets.) Los Angeles made an offer O'Malley couldn't refuse, and the rest is history.

Shapiro recounts this political drama against the background of Brooklyn's last great season, 1956, with all the ups and downs from April through October. The Dodgers, defending World Champions, began abysmally before fighting their way to mediocrity. They surged to first place toward the end of the season, stumbled briefly, but then recovered in time to win the pennant. In the World Series they reverted to their old habits and lost to the Yankees.

The Last Good Season will inevitably be compared with *The Boys of Summer*, Roger Kahn's unforgettable memoir about the 1952 and 1953 Dodgers and possibly the greatest book ever written on baseball. Shapiro's work, unlike Kahn's, is not a meditation on the passage from youth to manhood or the fleeting nature of fame, but it is nonetheless a terrific read and a valuable contribution—for its literary grace and skillful interweaving of narratives, its wise perspective on the larger social context of baseball, and its sober, fair-minded judgments.

His sketches of the 1956 Dodgers are sharp and fresh—not only of Robinson and Reese, but, as Kahn described them, the whole "fascinating mix of vigorous men": Campy, Newk, and "the Duke," "Skoonj" (short for the Italian *scungili*, or snail, Carl Furillo's favorite dish), "Oisk" (Brooklynese for Erskine), Hodges, Labine, Craig, Bessent, Roebuck, and Loes (who said he lost a ground ball in the sun and was traded in mid-season), two guys named Sandy, a Randy, a "Junior," a "Barber," a "Rube," and Johnny Podres, whose heroics in the 1955 World Series caught the attention of his draft board. He spent the 1956 season in the Navy.



The departure to Los Angeles of a team this talented and eccentric froze in New York's collective memory an image that has yet to disappear. Much of it is idealized—like that of a poet who dies at twenty-one and is remembered as a golden youth rather than the cranky septuagenarian he would have become. Still, Jimmy Cannon, a leading columnist of the day, had it right when he prophesied of those Brooklyn Dodgers: "You'll be talking about them for a long time."

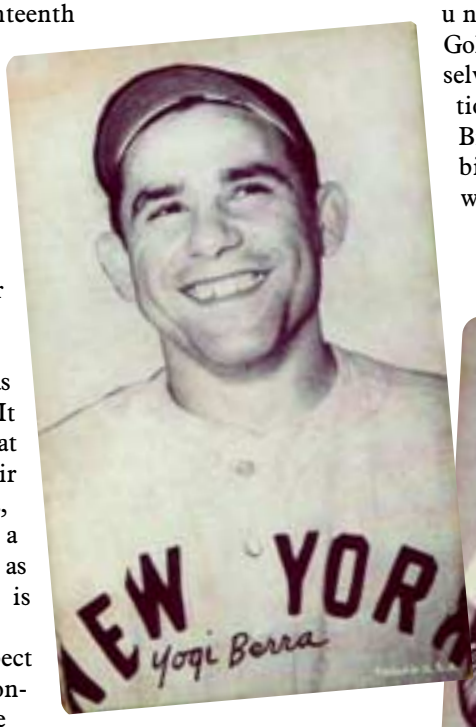
Of course one can hardly talk about the Brooklyn Dodgers without also discussing their great nemesis, the New York Yankees. Even in the middle of the century, the Yankees were often denigrated as a rich team that simply outbid the poor ones for the best talent. But the truth is that monetary advantage was somewhat less important in the era before free agency. For that matter, in the 1940s and 1950s, when the Yanks beat Brooklyn in the World Series six out of seven times, the Dodgers actually had the more profitable franchise.

The key to Yankee success was less cash than a winning attitude and an air of invincibility. It was Lou Gehrig, laboring in the shadow of Babe Ruth, who instilled the tradition of quiet professionalism, supreme confidence, and a mental toughness bordering on arrogance that runs through the team's history. The late Eddie Lopat, a crafty left-handed pitcher, explained it this way: "We just had that inner confidence we could beat them at anything—tiddlywinks, bowling, whatever. It probably wasn't justified—those were great Dodger ball clubs—but we just felt that way."

Superstars alone do not account for the Yankees' unprecedented success (thirty-eight American League pennants and twenty-six World Series championships). In every generation they have relied on gutsy, everyday players whose ability to perform in clutch situations is reflected less in their statistics than their nicknames—guys like Tommy Henrich ("Old Reliable"), Gene Woodling ("Old Faithful"), and Hank Bauer ("the Old Marine"). "They had an expression on the Yankees," Bauer once said, referring to the World Series jackpot: "'Don't screw with our money,' because we were going to the bank every October." Many players, to be part of that great tradition—and to enjoy the expected World Series bonus—declined contracts from other teams and signed with the Yankees for less money. To an extent then, you

could say it was the Yankees' winning that made them rich, rather than their riches that made them win.

Now *Daily News* columnist Bill Madden has captured the Yankee ethos beautifully in *The Pride of October*, an oral history based on interviews with seventeen retired Bronx Bombers. (Arlene Howard, widow of Elston, provides an eighteenth interview.) What seems to unite these men, so diverse in status and time, is the way they define themselves by their Yankee-hood, not just as ballplayers but as human beings. It is something that brightens their days and nights, and if they feel a downside at all, as some do, it is invariably an unresolved aspect of their relationship with the team—a feeling that they were excluded or betrayed or cheated, or that they failed to make the kind of contribution they had wished for.



Like the army veteran who forever thinks of himself as "an old soldier," an old Yankee never dies. Infielder Jerry Coleman, for instance, flew 177 combat missions as a Marine pilot in World War II and Korea, but he seems more in awe of Joe DiMaggio than of General MacArthur. The Yankees "weren't just a baseball team," he tells Madden. "They were a religion. . . . I can't imagine what it would have been like to play for any other team." Charlie Silvera, a little-used backup catcher of the same era, could have been a starter with most other teams, but considers himself blessed to have cashed his World Series checks and been "a spear carrier to the kings."

Whether intentionally or not, Madden helps refute the negative stereotypes of the Yankees as a corporate behemoth manned by cold-blooded mercenaries. "Rooting for the Yankees is like rooting for U.S. Steel," detractors sneered after the Yanks in 1953 won an unprecedented fifth consecutive world championship. No doubt the team's own publicity, on yearbook covers and such, reinforced the unsympathetic Goliath view of themselves, with illustrations of the typical Bronx Bomber as a big strapping guy with broad shoulders and a large jaw. There were some who looked like that, of course, but many more of those Yankees didn't—because the Yankees' management always thought, as we like to say nowadays, outside of the box.

Here's a case in point: Phil Rizzuto, "the Scooter," a Hall of Fame shortstop, the American League's most-valuable player in 1950, and only five feet, six inches tall. Now eighty-five years old, Rizzuto doesn't even have that height anymore. Madden visits him at his home in Hillside, New Jersey, where, from the top floors, they can see Manhattan. "I can't bear to look out there anymore," Rizzuto says, referring to the missing towers of the World Trade Center. "They're gone and I feel as empty as my view."

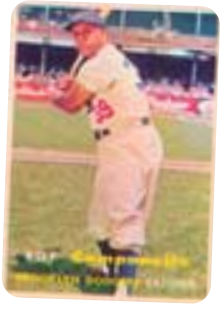
He's not even a *nasty* little guy, like the characters played by Joe Pesci in the movies, but a nice one. "I've had the most wonderful lifetime that one man could possibly have," Rizzuto says. "And I owe everything to the Yankees." Indeed, this Brooklyn-born overachiever could not even get a tryout with the Giants or the Dodgers. In 1935, Dodgers' manager Casey Stengel told him "to go get yourself a shoeshine box." (Stengel would later become the Yankees' most successful skipper, but Rizzuto never forgot the slight.)

Another case in point is catcher Yogi Berra, Rizzuto's teammate and best friend, winner of three most-valuable-player awards, ten World Series rings, the wise collaborator of Yankee pitchers for two decades, and author of such famous truisms as, "It ain't over till it's over."

Yogi, as Madden describes him, is a man of "short, squatty physique" with "large protruding ears, and a gap-tooth smile." Passed over by the St. Louis Cardinals in favor of Joe Garagiola, he might also have seemed an unlikely Yankee, hardly a successor to Bill Dickey, the tall, handsome Louisianan who once roomed with Lou Gehrig. But, as Madden points out, the Yankees were able to recognize what many other teams missed: that they had a diamond in the rough, a baseball genius hidden behind a clownish image. Stengel always considered him the team's "assistant manager." (Of Dickey, his mentor, he is alleged to have said, "He learned me all of his experiences.")

Whitey Ford—"Slick" to his pals—provides yet another refutation of Yankee hatred. A fairly small lefty (5'10" is

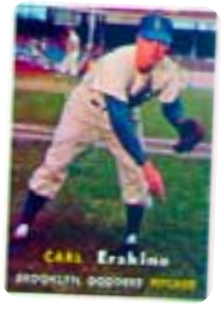
short for a pitcher) with cunning and control rather than overpowering stuff, Ford remains, at seventy-four, the same cocky, wisecracking city kid he was in 1950, when, while still in the minors, he phoned New York and offered his services to help the Yankees win a tight pennant race. And he delivered. Whitey provided the margin of victory for the pennant that season, won the last game of the World Series against Philadelphia, and went on to become one of the greatest big game pitchers ever, winning a record ten World Series games and hurling a record thirty-two consecutive scoreless innings in Series play. Of Whitey's legendary self-confidence Mickey Mantle once said, "Stick a baseball in his hand and he became the most arrogant guy in the world."



Madden also reveals the regrets and disappointments of those who, for one reason or another, were unable to fulfill their Yankee destiny. Lou Piniella was a star outfielder for the Yankee championship teams of the late 1970s and had a brief tenure as manager in the 1980s. He went on to great success managing other clubs (including a World Series victory with Cincinnati in 1990) but is nagged by "one regret"—that he "didn't get the opportunity to win in New York."

Then there's Reggie Jackson, whose World Series heroics in 1977 (three home runs in the sixth game) earned him the sobriquet "Mr. October." But his self-defeating egomania clashed with the megalomania of Yankee owner George Steinbrenner. Jackson, now seemingly more mature, occasionally works for the Yankees in vaguely defined roles as a "special adviser," but he clearly burns with a desire somehow to contribute and "be more a part of it all."

And there are the guys who had potential and squandered it. Like Joe Pepitone, child of Brooklyn's streets and sandlots, a colorful and likeable player who had some good years in the 1960s. He has the distinction of being the first man to bring a hair dryer into the locker room. But Peppy couldn't resist the wine, women, and pills. A promising career sputtered into mediocrity, and later conviction for illegal possession of cocaine and a pistol. (He overslept his first appointment for an interview with Madden, perhaps making up for the sleep he missed during his playing days.) On the whole, though, Peppy seems to have gotten himself together, with the help of his wife of thirty years. His lawyer helped, too, as did George Steinbrenner, who got him into a work-release program from Riker's Island. He has a good life now and knows it, but the title of his autobiography—*Joe, You Coulda Made Us Proud*—reveals he still thinks about what might have been.



In the 1970s Ron Blomberg was the Jewish Joe Pepitone, another charming eccentric who could have been great but didn't take care of himself, suffering injuries and losing the good will of some of his teammates. His most impressive statistic is having eaten twenty-eight hamburgers in one sitting, beating Babe Ruth's twenty-four hot dogs, and all without gaining weight. Blomberg holds the absolutely unbreakable record of having been the first player to step to the plate as a DH—designated hitter, or as Blomberg liked to call himself, a designated Hebrew.

Most heartbreaking of all are the stories of Bobby Murcer and Don Mattingly, fan favorites who had all the right stuff to be October heroes, but were thwarted by fate. Murcer was the best hitter of the Yankees' lean years, between Mickey Mantle and Reggie Jackson. The easygoing Murcer was, like Mantle, an Oklahoman and a shortstop who became a centerfielder, and he was for a time touted as Mantle's heir. In a move later regretted even by the Yankee front office, Murcer was traded to San Francisco after the 1974 season, and he missed the pennant and world championship seasons of 1976, 1977, and 1978. He was later brought back as a part-time player and has since become a popular Yankee announcer. Madden shrewdly observes that Murcer never disappointed anyone by failing to be the next Mantle, but he is a man who was "deprived of fulfilling his Yankee destiny." In a strange twist, the fans have accorded Murcer the respect due one of their World Series winners, almost as if in some alternate universe he had actually been permitted to fulfill that destiny.

Even more poignant perhaps is the case of Don Mattingly, the team's undisputed leader in the 1980s and a superb clutch player. Despite his modest stature, Mattingly used to hit scorching line drives, exhibiting the kind of power that Lou Gehrig was famous for, and playing first base with even greater skill than Gehrig. Yet "Donnie Baseball," as he was nicknamed, never played in a World Series because the Yankees were in a long drought period. (The team, he tells Madden, kept trading for more hitters when it really needed better pitching.)

Injuries forced Mattingly into a premature retirement after the 1995 season, just before the Yankees began their most recent streak of World Series appearances and championships. "Sometimes in life you just don't get what you want," he says. "You can try your hardest, do everything you think you need to do, . . . and sometimes you still don't get there."

That's a lesson that the Brooklyn Dodgers' players and fans had to learn long before the Yankees'. But it's a lesson that comes to all of us, in the end. ♦

Senator Joe Judge at bat

Courtesy Mark Gauvreau Judge

The Year the Last Were First

The 1924 Senators and Washington's only World Series championship. **BY FRED BARNES**

When I was growing up in a Virginia suburb of Washington in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the Washington Senators could be counted on to reinforce the view of the city as "first in war, first in peace, and last in the American League."

Baseball fans in Washington didn't demand much. When a batter got a 2-and-0 count, the crowd at Griffith Stadium (and, later, at RFK Stadium) would begin cheering in hopes of a base on balls. Some of the Senators were clownish. Carlos Paula, a slugging outfielder, took two days to report after being called up from the minors. He explained it was because of the time change between the Central and Eastern time zones. Julio Becquer, a slick-fielding first baseman, asked a friendly fan to drive his car to Washington after spring training in Florida. He never saw the car again. In a doubleheader I attended, the pitcher for the Senators was knocked out in the first inning of the first game, and then returned in relief to lose the second game.

Damn Senators
My Grandfather and the Story of Washington's Only World Series Championship
by Mark Gauvreau Judge
Encounter, 155 pp., $25.95

But there was a moment when the Senators were not the laughingstock of major-league baseball, a glorious moment when nearly everyone in Washington—from President Coolidge to the cab drivers—and even fans of rival teams cheered the Senators to their only World Series triumph. That was 1924 and one of the stars of the team was first baseman Joe Judge. His grandson, Mark Gauvreau Judge, has beautifully captured the excitement and intensity of that season in *Damn Senators*. (The title is a play on *Damn Yankees*, the 1950s musical about the pact a young Senators fan makes with the devil to stop the Yankees and bring another pennant to Washington.)

What made 1924 so memorable was not just that the Senators beat the New York Yankees, led by Babe Ruth, and clinched the pennant in the next to last game of the regular season. And it was not just that the Senators nipped the New York Giants, managed by the great John McGraw, in the seventh game of the World Series. Nor was it simply the fact that no president has rooted for a major-league baseball team as vigorously as Calvin Coolidge did for the Senators that year. No, what made the season so extraordinary was the team that owner Clark Griffith, the Old Fox, assembled to complement his great pitcher, the Big Train, Walter Johnson.

Johnson was in the twilight of his career in 1924 and already regarded as the greatest pitcher of all time. Humble and gentlemanly, he was beloved by players and fans. Judge, who had joined the Senators in 1915, and Johnson were once rushing to a movie in St. Louis when Johnson was waylaid by a fan for fifteen minutes. What took so long? Judge asked. Johnson explained the fellow was from Kansas, Johnson's home state, and knew his sister. "I had to be nice to him," Johnson said. Judge said he didn't know Johnson had a sister. "I don't," the pitcher said. "But I still had to be nice to him."

Griffith spotted outfielder Sam Rice, later a Hall of Famer, when he

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pitched for a minor-league team while on furlough from the Navy. Following the 1921 season, Griffith added three players who were crucial to winning the World Series. One was a young slugger from South Carolina, Goose Goslin, also a Hall of Famer. Another was veteran shortstop Roger Peckinpaugh, bought from the Boston Red Sox. The third was Ossie Bluege, who played a shallow third base, "reasoning that the ground he had to cover was cone-shaped, and that playing closer to home meant 'cutting the angles.'"

The most surprising step by Griffith was his selection of a new manager: twenty-seven-year-old second baseman Bucky Harris, one of the youngest Senators, nine years younger than Johnson, four years younger than Judge. Neither of the older men resented being passed over for manager. Johnson, still healing from injuries, had declared 1924 his last season and felt he could pitch only every four days, not both games of a doubleheader as he once had. (Starters today normally throw only once every five days.)

The Senators were no one's pick for the pennant and they languished in third or fourth place for several months. But Harris imbued the club with a fighting spirit and it adopted the slogan, "Never beaten." And Johnson returned to his old form, becoming once again the fastest pitcher in baseball. That, plus better hitting, ignited a pennant run in late summer.

In early September, Coolidge invited the Senators to the White House and told them he'd love to attend a World Series in Washington. Meanwhile, Judge writes, Johnson had become a "national cause." He had "poured his genius into so many losing Washington teams that the world was ready to see him finally win one. Johnson was admired for his character. . . . [He] seemed a throwback to a simpler, quieter, more decent America. He never raised his voice or scolded teammates. . . . The only time anyone remembered Johnson losing his temper was when he saw a policeman trying to remove a black boy who used to hang around the park doing odd jobs to get close to the players."

Hulton Archive

Calvin Coolidge shakes hands with Walter Johnson in Griffith Stadium.

Johnson, whose record was 23-7 in 1924 with an ERA of 2.72, was rewarded with success in the World Series, but not in the way anyone expected. As a starter, he lost the first and fifth games. But then, in the seventh game, he was brought out in relief to pitch the crucial ninth inning. His fastball, which had vanished in the Series' earlier games, was back. He threw four scoreless innings, and the Senators won in the bottom of the twelfth inning on a bad hop single to left field. "Some say the ball hit a pebble," Judge writes. "Others think God Himself made it hop." All Johnson could say after the game was, "Gee, I was lucky, wasn't I?"

Great players make their own luck, and Johnson had done exactly that. Decades later when I watched the Senators, they had no great players and no luck. I recall a play that epitomized those later Senators. It was at home, against the Red Sox, three runs down, bottom of the ninth, bases loaded, the Senators up to bat in their last chance to win the game, Hank Allen at the plate.

My friend Jim Haley was with me at the game. He insisted Hank was better than his brother Richie, the star for the Philadelphia Phillies, and indeed Hank crushed the ball to deep center. Red Sox centerfielder Reggie Smith streaked back and reached over the shoulder-high fence. It looked like a home run, but Smith suddenly lifted his glove with the ball caught halfway in the web. He raced toward the infield holding his glove up. The Senators had lost again. It was nothing like 1924. ♦

BCA

Fall Guys

The 1978 Yankees a quarter-century later.

BY JOHN P. ROSSI

All real baseball fans, especially long suffering Boston Red Sox ones, know what happened in 1978. Just mention the name Bucky Dent in Boston and watch the faces change color. The "Curse of the Bambino"—the loss of Babe Ruth to New York in 1920—was hard to take, but at least he was Babe Ruth and so gave New York an excuse for winning. Bucky Dent was just, well, Bucky Dent: a player who wouldn't be remembered at all, except that he helped the Yankees defeat the Red Sox, once again.

In *October Men*, Roger Kahn brings that season alive so Red Sox fans can

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relive their angst. Kahn is the author of one of the most influential baseball books ever written, *The Boys of Summer*, his sad but touching memoir of what happened to the great Dodgers dynasty of the 1950s. His new book seeks to do the same for a great team of the 1970s: the brawling, squabbling New York Yankees of George Steinbrenner, Billy Martin, and Reggie Jackson. *October Men* focuses on the dramatic comeback the Yankees staged to erase the fourteen-game lead the Red Sox held in early August.

The cast of characters suits Kahn's flair for vivid, if sometimes over-the-top prose. How can a book peopled by egomaniacs like Reggie Jackson, overbearing owners like Steinbrenner, or near paranoids like Billy Martin not be interesting? Kahn paints an unforgettable portrait of that Yankee team. There is the General Patton-obsessed Steinbrenner, learning how to run a baseball team. There is Martin, the managerial genius, whose suspicions of those around him drove him to drink and out of baseball more than once and eventually contributed to his death in a car accident. My favorite portrait is of Jackson, the immensely talented and intelligent power hitter whose boast that he was the "straw that stirred the drink" irritated many of his teammates and led them to despise him.

Numerous villains fill Kahn's book, but the closest thing to heroes are Al Rosen, the former Cleveland all-star third-baseman, brought in by Steinbrenner as president of the Yankees, and Bob Lemon, the Hall of Fame pitcher, who replaced Martin as manager and guided the Yankee comeback. Rosen always behaved like a gentleman and never embarrassed himself, something rare on the 1978 Yankees. He learned the job of baseball executive under Steinbrenner's trying leadership, quickly left the Yankees, and achieved great success with the Houston Astros and the San Francisco Giants. Lemon took over the Yankees when the team had hit bottom as Martin self-destructed. Calling everyone "Meat" (a term of affection in baseball), he calmed an overwrought team, let them play to their own considerable talents, and eventually led them to victory in a one-game playoff over the Red Sox.

Todd A. Gipstein / CORBIS

Reggie Jackson batting for the Yankees.

Kahn's book contains flashes of good writing, as one would expect from an old pro who has been covering sports, particularly baseball, for fifty years. The portraits of the key actors in the 1978 season are gems. He gives Don Zimmer, the feisty Red Sox manager, credit for holding an injured team together as the season wound down, instead of blaming Zimmer for the team's collapse. His portrait of Jim "Catfish" Hunter is warm, affectionate, and insightful. Hunter, Kahn shows, was anything but a simple country hick. He brought a degree of class to an otherwise classless team. Like Lemon, Hunter was someone easy to like.

October Men
Reggie Jackson, George Steinbrenner, Billy Martin, and the Yankees' Miraculous Finish in 1978
by Roger Kahn
Harcourt, 368 pp., $26

Kahn has a weakness for showing off his learning. He weaves in quotes from Robert Browning, Ernest Hemingway, Herman Melville, and Robert Frost, among others. There are also digressions that wander from the drama of the 1978 season, especially a long prologue that is little more than a padded history of New York baseball. Some parts are contradictory or repetitious: Kahn mentions the sale price of Babe Ruth twice and gives different figures each time. Some of Kahn's assertions are also questionable. "Goose" Gossage, the relief ace, had a "nice but not great year" before signing with the Yankees in 1978, he insists. Gossage in 1977 with the Pirates won 11 games, saved 26, and struck out 151 batters while compiling a 1.62 ERA. He didn't approach those figures for the Yankees in 1978.

Kahn also argues that Jackson was not recognized as a great hitter at the time, arguing it was the result of racism. Perhaps that's true. But then he implies that Mickey Mantle, Ted Williams, and Stan Musial received recognition because they were white. And that's just crazy. Jackson's lifetime batting average was .262, thirty-six points lower than Mantle's, eighty-two points lower than Williams's, and sixty-nine points lower than Musial's.

Still, Roger Kahn can hardly write a bad book, and *October Men* is a good read for any baseball fan. It vividly captures one of the most memorable seasons in baseball history, and it stands out among recent serious baseball writing. ♦

Not a Parody

Former President Bill Clinton addressed the annual spring conference of the Conference Board in New York on April 15, 2003.

[Interviewer Marvin Kalb asks Clinton if he agrees with the view that America has undergone a fundamental change with a new president, 9/11, and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.]

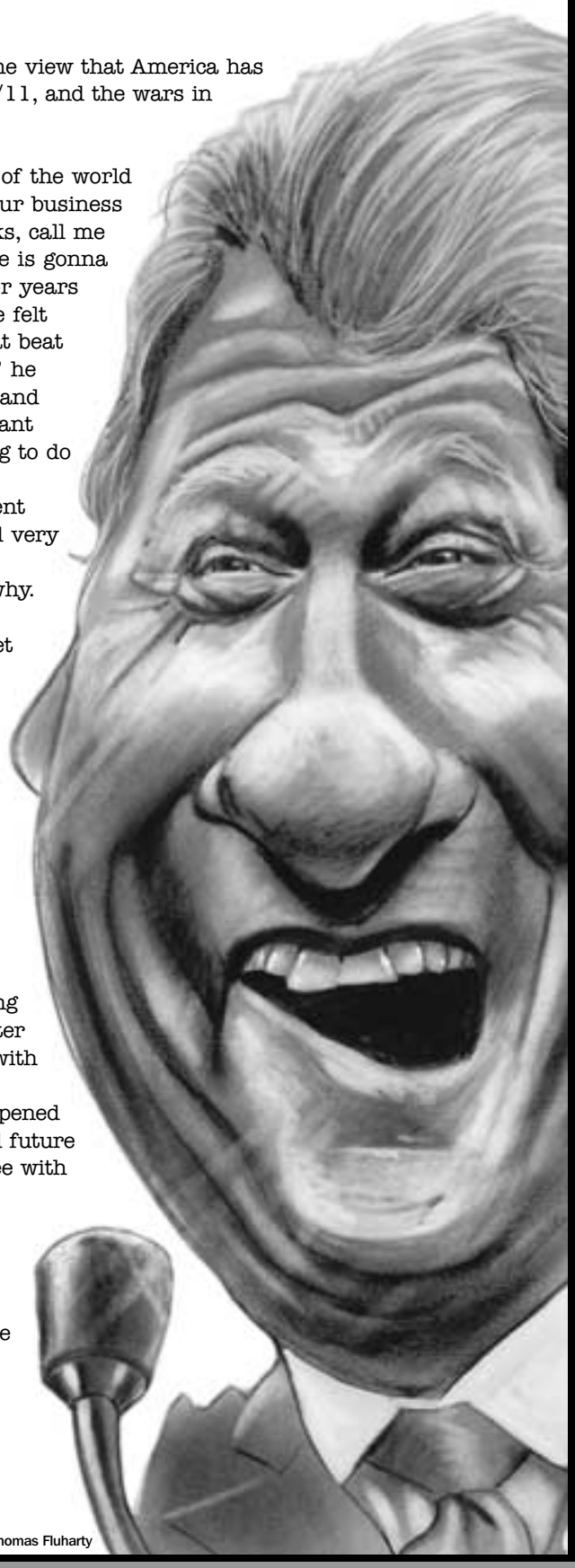
BILL CLINTON: No . . . [the] fundamental larger realities of the world are and were the same. . . . I had one guy, one only in your business who . . . had a very prominent role in one of the networks, call me in the week after September 11 and he said, "Nobody else is gonna call you but I will." He said, "You warned us about this for years and years and years, and we never covered it because we felt secure, and we felt we preferred to cover all the stuff that beat you up and diverted the American people from this. But," he said, "I just went back and pulled a list of what you said and what you did and when you did it," and he said, "I just want you to know, no one else will say this to you but I'm going to do it." I was shocked and grateful. . . .

KALB: [It sounds like you are] profoundly in disagreement with those people in the administration right now who feel very negatively toward the U.N. . . .

CLINTON: Yeah, I am. I'm totally angry and I'll tell you why. . . . We liked the U.N. a lot after September 11, when the whole world said, "We'll go to Afghanistan and help you get Osama bin Laden." There are German and French soldiers in Afghanistan today. . . . We don't want 'em to help us find bin Laden any more since they didn't agree with our timetable in Iraq. It's a complicated world out there, they don't work for us. You know, Hans Blix was begging for more time, and they said, "We think he ought to have it." And our side says "no, we're gonna liberate Iraq, and we've got a resolution which gives us the authority to do it, and so we've determined that we're gonna do it now, and if you don't like it we'll get even with you when it's over." . . . I think the idea that we should somehow scorn everyone who disagrees with us, because we decided that we would set the timetable for an invasion instead of letting Mr. Blix do it, when all these countries came to our aid after 9/11 and many still have soldiers at risk in Afghanistan with us, is a gross overreaction. . . .

Our paradigm now seems to be, something terrible happened to us on September 11. It gave us the right to interpret all future events in a way that everyone else in the world must agree with us, and if they don't they can go straight to hell. . . .

So yeah, I'm still pretty much for the U.N. I still think Kofi Annan's a good guy who deserved the Nobel Peace Prize. . . . I think if we had given it a little more time, there is a chance either that [Saddam] would have disarmed or if we had gone in then we would've had far more members of the Security Council with us.



Thomas Fluharty

the weekly Standard

APRIL 28, 2003