the weekly Standard

OCTOBER 27, 2003

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THE (FINALLY) EMERGING GOP MAJORITY
FRED BARNES

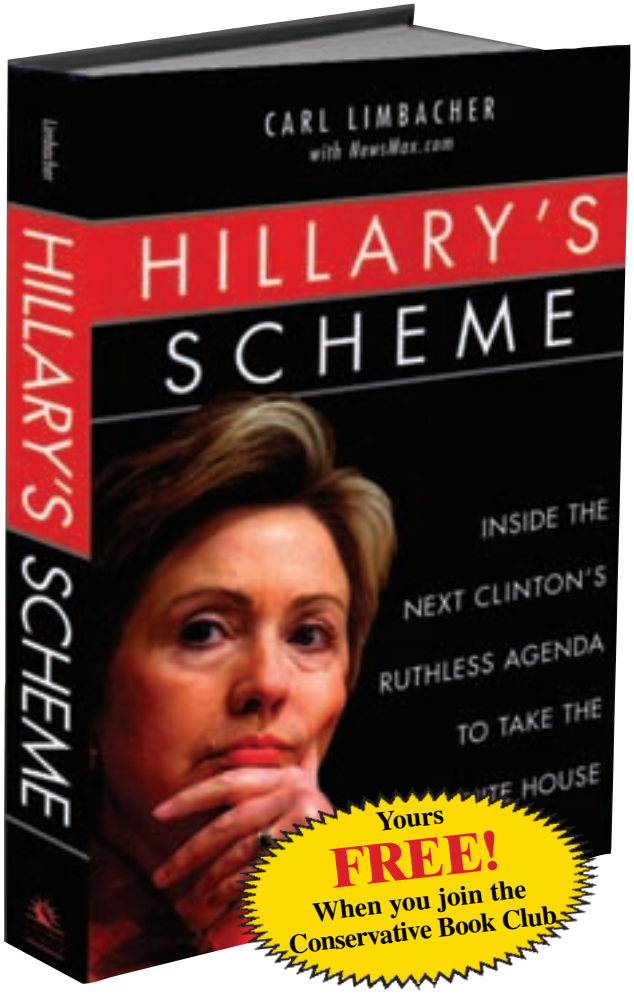
"UNDER GOD"

The History of a Phrase

by James Piereson

REVEALED…The Clintons' plans to make Hillary President!

And ruthlessly destroy any obstacle in her way



Your worst fears may be about to come true. **Hillary's Scheme: Inside the Next Clinton's Ruthless Agenda to Take the White House** exposes the Clintons' long-range, highly detailed plan to make Hillary President of the United States – and yes, despite her official denials, she's still mulling over a run in 2004.

In shocking detail, investigative journalist Carl Limbacher here blows the lid off the New York senator's plans for a grand political coup, something she has been carefully and quietly plotting for more than 20 years. With a patience, doggedness, and thirst for the truth that few reporters have displayed, Limbacher got the full story of Hillary's plans by conducting extensive research into Hillary's past and securing exclusive interviews with Clinton insiders. He even questioned Hillary herself! Limbacher uncovers the juicy morsels, backroom deals, and insider wrangling surrounding Hillary's presidential ambitions—the hidden details that the mainstream press is too intimidated by (or enamored of) the Clintons to tell you about.

Think that Hillary doesn't stand a chance to become President? Limbacher shows how they'll get around potential and real scandals of a magnitude and much more….find out when you join the Conservative Book Club!

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Five Forgotten Schools

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

The increasing demand for charter schools, and the educational options they provide, has been elevated by the belief that urban schools need dramatic improvement. But why hasn't this push produced more results? **The story of five forgotten schools serves as one example of the hypocrisy of some school reform**—opponents of major change claiming they want to improve schools but being satisfied with merely blocking change.

In December 2000, at the prodding of former mayor Rudolph Giuliani, the New York City Board of Education made national headlines by initiating a bold reform to improve five of its most chronically poor-performing schools. The schools were to be partnered with a private manager to turn them around. Edison Schools, Inc., had been selected, after a lengthy review process involving multiple applicants, to run PS 161 in Harlem, PS 66 in the Bronx, and MS 320, MS 246, and IS 111 in Brooklyn.

But there was one stipulation. The parents at each school had to vote to approve the initiative. In no time local activist organizations and the city teachers union, all with vested interests in keeping the schools under direct board control, launched a noisy campaign of misinformation, denouncing Edison as a profiteer, the mayor as an enemy of public education, and the board as a bunch of backroom dirty dealers. The initiative was voted down in all five schools.

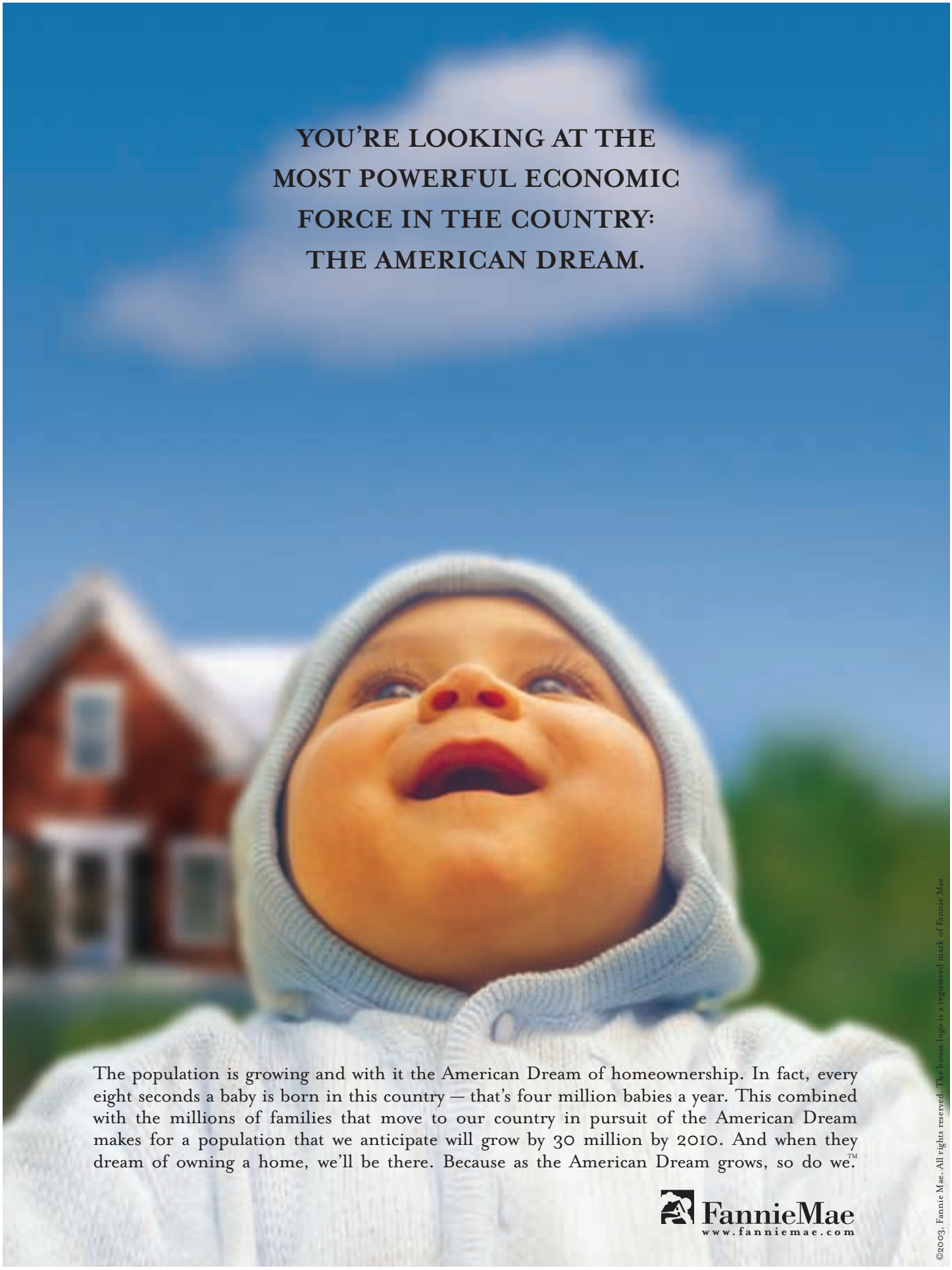
Lost in the debate was the tragic disservice these schools were doing to children. In January 2001, while activists were defending the schools against outside intervention, the schools were quietly failing most of their students. On average only 19 percent at each school achieved proficiency on the New York state reading assessment. Of course, the protesters promised to work for the schools' improvement after the voting was over.

But what happened? One school, IS 111, was closed and another, MS 320, was reconstituted. **The four schools that remain open in their new or original forms continue to fail their students miserably.** Two years later reading proficiency rates have improved only 4 percentage points on average.

Meanwhile, Edison has been working with community groups elsewhere in the state—the Bronx, Buffalo, Rochester, Albany, and Riverhead—to open six charter schools. These schools serve children with high levels of economic need whose test scores two years ago looked just like the scores in the five New York City schools. But today, those charter schools have taken their students to promising heights, raising their state reading scores an average of 17 percentage points. One has to wonder whether this kind of progress could have come to the five schools, now sadly forgotten, in New York City.

The New York City Board of Education has been dissolved, replaced by direct mayoral control of the schools. The new chancellor, Joel Klein, is not beholden to any of the groups that squelched the partnership with Edison. The politics of school reform now hinges on the support for Mayor Mike Bloomberg, who appoints the chancellor. Thus far Chancellor Klein has shown tremendous resolve to buck the status quo, maintain a focus on children at all costs, and embrace ideas his predecessors found too hot to handle. For the sake of the hundreds of troubled New York City public schools, let's hope he keeps it up.

— John E. Chubb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the weekly Standard

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The Pledge Guy

Early last week the Supreme Court announced that it would review *United States* v. *Michael A. Newdow, et al.*, the case whereby the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has prohibited—as a violation of the First Amendment's religious "establishment clause"—organized recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in the public schools of California and eight other states. The pledge's "under God" phrase, though admittedly nonsectarian, is nevertheless, the Ninth Circuit panel reasons, a governmental endorsement of "theism," or at the very least an explicit acknowledgment that the Founders thought themselves directed by divine providence. Congress thus erred in June 1954 when it passed legislation to incorporate the words "under God" into the pledge. And President Eisenhower then erred by signing the measure. He ought instead, presumably, to have vetoed the thing, as Article I, Section 7, of the Constitution gave him authority to do: "within ten Days (Sundays excepted)."

Come to think of it, the Ninth Circuit may want to look into that "Sundays excepted" business, as well.

If, that is, the entire controversy isn't actually a nullity, since the law in question was reviewed by a Ninth Circuit that was created by a Congress that was established by a Constitution that was forwarded to the states for ratification by a Constitutional Convention . . . which decided to do the forwarding, as our founding document explains, on "the Seventeenth Day of September in the Year of Our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty seven." Thus launched on the world with an unmistakable show of respect for "Our Lord," the Constitution must itself be unconstitutional, no?

The *Newdow* case, in short, is farcical. All the more so because it will be personally presented to the Supreme Court by its plaintiff, who intends to represent himself *pro se*. The "Rev. Dr. Michael A. Newdow," as he styles himself, is a "minister" of the "First Amendment Church of True Science," which he founded, and which embraces "religious views" that "deny the existence of a God." So it is an unconstitutional "affront" to Newdow's "religion" that his elementary school daughter is "compelled to watch and listen" as other children recite a pledge that mentions God. In fact, it "unconstitutionally burdens his free exercise of religion" that Newdow is even required to complain about the pledge—because, as he acknowledges, the notoriety of his lawsuit "will essentially preclude him from obtaining public office." And Newdow is otherwise an excellent candidate for public office, as the CD of self-penned folk songs he's selling on the Internet attests. "Names that Flow Together" is THE SCRAPBOOK's favorite tune: "Harry Truman, Thurgood Marshall, Nadine Strossen, Malcolm X, Mike Newdow / Over many centuries you watch as each one's reputation grows."

The Rev. Dr. Newdow, by the way, has been locked in a years-long legal struggle with his daughter's mother, whom he never married, and with whom he does *not* share legal custody of the child. Moreover, the 9-year-old girl's mother insists that her daughter is "a Christian who regularly attends church," "believes in God," and "wants to be able to say that we are 'one Nation under God' as part of the Pledge of Allegiance."

You gotta feel sorry for this little girl. And you gotta admit, her problem with the Pledge of Allegiance is probably the least of her woes. ♦

Twisted Mister

As hundreds of formerly unemployable California Republicans, Hollywood hangers-on, and idiot brothers-in-law apply for jobs in the new Arnold Schwarzenegger administration, THE SCRAPBOOK would like to put a deserving citizen up for consideration as Minister of Music: Dee Snider from Twisted Sister.

Like most who followed Arnold's campaign, we weren't sure if we could take any more of the Snider-authored theme song, "We're Not Gonna Take It." But then we met Mr. Snider backstage at an Arnold rally. We asked him if he was ready to rock. "Yeah, absolutely," he said, "This is what my entire life has been leading up to."

No longer is he the same Dee Snider who caused our youth minister to burn his records. Still braided and leathered, with a Latin tattoo inscribed in his arm that translates "Never Let the Bastards Wear You Down," Snider is now a more cuddly version of the man who once tormented Tipper Gore and the Parent's Music Resource Center. His teeth, once filed into fangs, are now tastefully capped. Yet his entry into our nation's civic life seems to have even him baffled. "I was getting investigated in the '80s, and now my song is practically a folk song. I don't know how it happened."

To see if he could handle the rough'n'tumble of politics, we asked

Snider if Arnold's scheduling of this particular rally on the eve of Yom Kippur was indicative of a casual disregard for God's chosen people. "Being half Jew," he said, "I didn't even realize. I think my grandmother's going to be upset." What a pro.

Of the sexual misconduct allegations that dogged Arnold throughout the homestretch of his campaign, Snider, who considers himself a political moderate (having previously supported John McCain, Rudy Giuliani, and Bill Clinton) sagely suggested, "The ultra-right wing—they overlook the stuff their team does. But they go *nuts* [when the Dems do it]. That's why Clinton did as well as he did, because he knew how to play the political game. It made them *nuts*. It was great to watch. Just like this is great to watch."

Not that he personally doesn't subscribe to clean living. In fact, so squeaky clean is Snider, that when we asked him to join us for drinks, he told us he couldn't, because he doesn't. "I'm clean and sober, married 27 years," he said. "People would be shocked that I have no crazy lifestyle. I've never done any drugs or alcohol. I'm like an alien in my community." Did we say Minister of Music? With this sort of spotless personal-life jacket, perhaps the world is ready for Governor Dee Snider. ♦

$87 Billion Here, $87 Billion There . . .

With all the controversy on Capitol Hill over the White House's $87 billion request for Iraq reconstruction, we got curious about where you might turn up that kind of money, and fired up the Nexis search engine to see where harried legislators might want to go looking. Here were a few of the hits from our search:

⋆ According to Nucleus Research Co., the cost to American business for dealing with email spam is about $87 billion a year. The *New York Times* reports that if each worker spends 6 1/2 minutes a day erasing spam, that makes for an annual cost of $874 per worker. Multiply by 100 million workers and you've got nation-building money—87 billion big ones.

⋆ The Bay Area's 25-year transportation plan calls for investment of $87 billion. Insert your favorite BART joke here.

⋆ The tort system costs about $200 billion a year, according to the Manhattan Institute, and the president's Council of Economic Advisors says at least $87 billion of that is pure waste. (Note to the truly conspiracy-minded: The council came up with its figure before the appropriations request was final.)

On second thought, that last item might not be too appealing to most of the folks opposing the Iraq supplemental. After all, The Scrapbook assumes that the massive donations to Democratic candidates that trial lawyers are in the habit of making were counted in the "pure waste" category. ♦

Casual

West Words, Ho!

Oddly enough, words figure prominently among the souvenirs I brought back from a recent short visit to Montana. It all began when we stopped at our very first overlook on the Yellowstone River. Staring down at the whitewater, my friend remembered being at a similar spot maybe 50 years ago and hearing his father say, "Look at the rabbits in the river."

Why is it that the mind of a child is not programmed to ask for a clarification at a moment like that? Why not just say, "What do you mean, Dad? I don't see any rabbits." It brought back the times in my own childhood when my parents would play records and I'd wait for Eartha Kitt to croon the line, "He bought me the Black Sea for my swimming poooool," and wonder whether every pool needed a "black C" and what it was.

Whatever the reason for this juvenile inhibition, I'll never hear the word "rapids" quite the same since my trip to Big Sky country. Or the word "shed."

It was in the general store at Emigrant that I learned the Montana meaning of that second word. We'd stopped for a Sunday morning cup of coffee. Browsing among the ammo and fisherman's flies and fluorescent orange sweatshirts for hunters, I discovered that an elk call is a gadget useful for calling, stopping, locating, or calming your prey, while an elk shed is not a habitation but a thing. They had some right there in the store, on special for $135, or $250 a set. Hint: Before he shed them, the elk wore these showy fixtures on his head.

Emigrant is a mere speck of a town, across the river from a postcard-perfect mountain of the same name. One card I bought at the general store, published by Big Sky Magic Enterprises, of Helmville, captures the sweep of the country not only in the picture on the front but also in this panoramic sentence on the back:

"Emigrant Peak presides over an awesome assembly of major-league mountains north of Yellowstone National Park known as the Absaroka Range, and is one of the ranking reasons why the Gardiner-to-Livingston portion of the Yellowstone River's trail across Montana is known as Paradise Valley."

We drove all the way down the valley to Gardiner, where the Roosevelt Arch marks the original railway entrance to Yellowstone Park. It's a high, rough-hewn, gray stone arch on the very edge of town, named for TR, the West-loving New Yorker who laid the cornerstone and was president at the time of its dedication in 1903.

We had lunch at the comfortably shabby Town Café, where the décor features antlers and skulls, a huge two-man miner's pan, and a pair of antique skis. The back of the menu offers "a little bit of Gardiner's history." The narrative dwells on the town's mining days, in the 1860s, when it had 200 people and 21 saloons. Grammatical quibbles notwithstanding, I rate this pair of sentences high for atmosphere:

"Being there was no sawmill, it was entirely tent houses with a few log shacks. It was lively during the summer months and dormant under the snow of the long winter months."

My prize find, though, came on the roadside historic marker at Emigrant Gulch on U.S. Highway 89.

I daresay I'm not the only editor who collects misuses of the word "literally" (as in: When I told my mom I'd pierced my tongue, she literally flew off the handle). It's easy sport, but amusing if diction happens to be your bag—and it heightens your appreciation for that rarity, an apt deployment of the word. Here's my Montana specimen of the latter, embedded in another fine sample of clean, landscape-conscious, weather-conscious western prose:

> Emigrants arrived in this gulch on August 28, 1864. Three of them explored the upper and more inaccessible portion of the gulch and struck good pay. A mining boom followed. When cold weather froze the slurries the miners moved down to the valley, built cabins, and "Yellowstone City" began its brief career.
>
> Provisions were scarce that winter. Flour sold for $28 per 96 pound sack, while smoking tobacco was literally worth its weight in gold.
>
> The strike was not a fabulous one, but snug stakes rewarded many of the pioneers for their energy and hardship.

We crossed into Wyoming and made it all the way down through Yellowstone that afternoon, in time to take in the Grand Tetons at dusk. That movie-star-glamorous range, its profile sharp against the evening sky, dripped "purple mountains' majesty."

As we stood there gazing at the Tetons across Jenny Lake, my friend evoked another childhood misunderstanding and another patriotic anthem. He said he wished we could stay there to see them "by the donzerly light."

Claudia Winkler

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Piece of Mind

In "Mind Games" (Oct. 13), Sally Satel and Keith Humphreys obfuscate the debate over mental health parity with misleading and dangerous arguments. Restricting mental health parity to those with "catastrophic mental illnesses," as they propose, would deny millions of Americans needed care.

Arbitrary insurance barriers result in many people with serious mental illnesses (not just the few severe illnesses Satel and Humphrey consider worthy) going untreated, with often tragic outcomes.

Limiting mental health parity for only a narrow group of diagnosed mental illnesses is comparable to providing equitable coverage for emphysema but not bronchitis or for heart disease but not high blood pressure.

Insurance discrimination against any disorder is fundamentally unfair and results in untold human suffering. The Senator Paul Wellstone Mental Health Parity Act currently before Congress is a fair and affordable solution that has broad bipartisan support. In fact, the Congressional Budget Office forecast less than a one percent premium increase if the bill were enacted. Fully ninety percent of that increase is attributable to providing parity for the few diagnoses Satel and Humphreys would single out.

Congress can—and should—pass full mental health parity now.

Michael M. Faenza
President and CEO
National Mental Health Association
Washington, DC

Satel and Humphreys respond: Given NMHA's long history of advocating for the seriously mentally ill, we are surprised that Faenza objects to prioritizing the needs of that population in parity legislation. Faenza's criticisms elide two realities we described in our article. First, people with milder conditions will not be disadvantaged by extending parity only to severe conditions because current benefits that cover them will remain intact. Second, full parity appears "affordable" only because the big-ticket items like hospitalization are so tightly managed that seriously impaired patients are often prematurely discharged.

More broadly, Faenza argues that it is an "arbitrary" form of "discrimination" to focus mental health parity on serious mental illnesses because he considers all psychological complaints equal. Our clinical experience and a large body of research lead us to disagree.

A 1997 *New England Journal of Medicine* article by a Harvard research group found that almost half of Americans who sought outpatient psychiatric care had "low mental health needs." There is of course nothing wrong with going to a psychotherapist to increase self-understanding or to cope with everyday anxieties, but such activities clearly differ from treatment for catastrophic mental illnesses such as schizophrenia. Tempting employers to drop mental health benefits by making them pay for such luxuries threatens the well-being of seriously mentally ill people for whom health insurance can be literally life-saving.

Vouchsafe This

As Katherine Mangu-Ward ("Let Them Eat Vouchers," Oct. 13) concludes, it would be a shame if the political courage mustered by California senator Dianne Feinstein, Washington, D.C., mayor Anthony Williams, and other D.C. Democrats in support of federally financed K-12 scholarships for needy D.C. schoolchildren should fail because of a threatened filibuster in the Senate. But even if that should be the sad outcome of the spirited voucher debate that went on in the nation's capital in the summer of 2003, it is not likely to be the final word. As Mangu-Ward's article indicates, the advocates who won open-minded Democrats over to a cause of educational freedom usually associated with Republican conservatives and libertarians were in large part local groups such as D.C. Parents for School Choice. The D.C. battle has made it clearer than ever that school choice is a populist cause that is being resisted by privileged elites who are on the wrong side of history. Choice will prevail.

Robert Holland
Senior Fellow, Lexington Institute
Arlington, VA

Bellwether

Jeffrey Bell should be congratulated for his much-needed analysis in "Bush I vs. Bush II" (Oct. 13). While Bush I showed intelligence and first-rate manners, he disappointed us greatly when it came to taxes and the first Gulf War, in which he followed Colin Powell's disastrous advice to cut the war short by five or six days. I prefer Bush II, who, although he is perhaps not the most learned student of history and international relations, is still full of common sense and courage. I hope that he will use more of the latter in future decision-making.

Niels de Groot
Geneva, Switzerland

• • •

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the weekly Standard

Biotech's Boiling Point

You know the story. The frog in a saucepan on the stove will die—because the temperature creeps up so smoothly and stealthily that he's never given the clue that *now* is the time to hop out. And so he boils to death, for if the rise from 70 degrees to 71 degrees didn't make him jump, why should the rise from 150 to 151?

We've never entirely believed the story—or its allegorical applications. Surely the frog will jump, and people, too, before the water gets too hot. But then, again, while America has been watching the pacification of Iraq, and the California gubernatorial recall, the temperature has been rising in the biotech revolution, and no one has jumped yet.

The artificial womb reached the prototype stage, and the heat went up a click. Researchers in Pennsylvania made embryonic stem cells from mice differentiate into egg cells, and up we went another click. Technicians in Israel and Holland discovered how to force the ovaries of aborted girls to produce the hormones for eggs, and up we went yet again. A scientist named Norbert Gleicher in Chicago inserted the cells of a male embryo into a female embryo to create a hermaphrodite chimera. Click. Researchers in China have constructed a three-parent embryo. Click—and click, and click, the dystopia of eugenic biotechnology is steaming all around us. And however disquieting all this seems, we are like the frog in the saucepan, for no one of these rises of temperature has yet made us jump.

The problem may be that biotechnology comes to us in discrete bits, and each new bit inures and vulgarizes us sufficiently to accept the next. Last month, the director of stem-cell research at Edinburgh University declared that British couples have a moral duty to visit local clinics and donate their eggs and sperm to create embryos for biotech research—and if you had suggested that it would come to this during the arguments about in-vitro fertilization 25 years ago, you would have been labeled an extremist and an apocalyptic fool. If during the abortion debates of the 1980s you had suggested that the day would come when the little ovaries of aborted girls were harvested for their eggs, you would have been denounced for using the most outrageous and implausible arguments. The Cassandras who worried about the human-genome project were mocked and ignored.

Vague disquiet is not the answer to all this. Each new bit of the biotech revolution arrives as though unconnected with every other bit. And often the researchers announce their motives are the best in the world. Who could be against perfect babies? Who doesn't want to live another 20 years? Who could oppose making people happy?

But the world the combination of these things is creating threatens to be a world both inhuman and inhumane. And unless we decide what all this science is *for*, it won't be for anything except its own power to remake the world. How many babies is it all right to strip-mine for their parts before we get a perfect baby? How many is it legitimate to get wrong before we get one right? How will society be changed by greater life expectancy? How much of human drive will disappear in a culture of happy drugs?

To fail to decide these questions is not to leave them open. It is to *close* the questions forever, and to give permanent victory to the people who want to push ahead without thought about the cost.

One helpful sign is the appearance this week of *Beyond Therapy: Biotechnology and the Pursuit of Happiness*, a report from the president's council on bioethics. It would be an extraordinary document to appear from almost any source, but its origin in a government body suggests we have not yet lost the capacity to discuss the most fundamental questions in the political arena.

Beginning by questioning the usefulness, in current medical science, of the traditional distinction between therapy for disease and enhancement of the human person, *Beyond Therapy* perceives a deep and abiding unity in the wildly scattered bits of the biotech endeavor. The effort to make better babies blends seamlessly into the hunt to enhance human performance—which slides imperceptibly into the drive for ageless bodies, which in turn merges with the longing for the pharmacology of happy souls.

The report examines fairly the likely benefits of each biotech field and lists the "possible hidden costs of success" were we to make those perfect, enhanced, ageless, happy humans. Can the "quest for self-improvement" ever end up making the self "smaller or meaner"? Might "a preoccupation with youthful bodies or longer life" jeopardize, in the end, "the prospect for living well"? And could the demand for "contentment or self-esteem" finally "lead us away from the activities or attachments essential to these goals"?

Beyond Therapy doesn't answer these questions directly, but it provides the material necessary for the public debate in which we might answer them—as answer them we must, and soon. Before the water starts to bubble.

—J. Bottum, for the Editors

Cover Stories

Everything you know about the CIA's clandestine work is wrong. **BY REUEL MARC GERECHT**

LIKE MANY FORMER and active-duty case officers of the Central Intelligence Agency, I often find it painful listening to outsiders talk about the clandestine service. Operations are usually rather straightforward, earthy affairs between consenting adults—espionage is seldom a seductive recruitment plan played out in the shadows. But outsiders routinely depict clandestine intelligence collection as a sexy, dark, and dangerous profession. Intelligence officers, too, often can't resist exaggerating the importance, the sleuthful methods, and the risk attached to a normal career in the Directorate of Operations. The common man, the journalist on the intelligence beat, and the spooks at Langley all prefer to see more fiction than fact in the "second oldest profession."

It is important to remember the above chemistry—the mixing of ignorance, curiosity, pride, and self-importance—when thinking about former ambassador Joseph Wilson and his "outed" CIA wife, Valerie Plame. It helps to explain how the commentary about the Wilson affair became so surreal, leading the press, Democratic congressmen and senators, and "professionals" within the intelligence community to suggest that Plame's outing in a leak to columnist Robert Novak had demoralized the intelligence community, quite possibly put Plame and her known foreign contacts into physical jeopardy, and even chilled recruitment efforts by American operatives worldwide. Foreigners, so the theory went, could no longer have confidence in the operational cover protecting their associations with CIA officials after the exposure of Ambassador Wilson's wife.

These hypotheses and conjectures, as it happens, were wildly overstated. There are reasons to be disturbed about what has been revealed in the Wilson-Plame affair, but they are not the reasons we have been told.

Cover is the Achilles' heel of the Operations Directorate. If you have a basic understanding of CIA cover, you can figure out why the over-the-top charges against the Bush administration in the Wilson matter make no sense. More important, you can get some inkling of why the Operations Directorate has done so poorly against many hard, and not-so-hard, targets in the past (for example, Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction programs). You will also develop a sinking suspicion that the clandestine service has not been running serious, "unilateral" counterterrorist operations against Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda since 9/11.

The key fact about CIA cover is that the vast majority of all case officers overseas "operate"—try to spot, develop, recruit, and run foreign agents—with little or none of it. This has been true for decades. The overwhelming majority of all CIA officers abroad—those serving within the clandestine service and those coming from other directorates—serve under "official" cover, usually as fake diplomats. Even the finest "official" cover often doesn't last long—a few months if an officer is lucky—because the bureaucratic differences between CIA officers and their State Department counterparts are significant enough to make "spot-the-spook" relatively easy for opposing counterintelligence services, foreign ministries, and savvy local businessmen and expatriates.

CIA officers also often eschew their cover work because it can be quite time-consuming, offers little professional reward inside the Agency, and is frequently more mentally demanding than "operations" (foreign service officers actually have to think more in their cable-writing, note-taking, and demarching than case officers do in arranging clandestine meetings and regurgitating headquarters debriefing notes). Official cover, even when good, often simply doesn't allow a case officer access to a sufficient number of possible targets (believe it or not, most foreign officials and Islamic holy warriors can't be convinced, seduced, or blackmailed into betraying "their" side). Most chiefs of CIA stations would gladly have their officers demolish their cover if by so doing the operatives could have some chance of meeting a target that could conceivably be recruited. Indeed, depending on the foreign target and sensitivity and prowess of the local counterespionage services, case officers regularly jettison their cover entirely, hoping that gossip and the allure of American power and money will work to their advantage.

The Bush administration's critics in the Wilson affair should be commended for worrying about the possible "blowback" on foreign contacts when operatives like Valerie Plame are exposed. The odds that any of her contacts are suffering, however, are small: Casual, even constant, open association with CIA officers isn't necessarily damning even in countries that look dimly upon unauthorized CIA operational activity within their borders. The CIA is an intelligence arm of the United States, not the Soviet Union. The French, the Indians, the Turks, and the Pakistanis—at times troublesome foreigners with first-rate, often adversarial internal-security services—know the difference.

And if Plame, as has been suggested, was overseas as a non-official cover officer, known in the trade as a

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NOC, her associations are even less at risk, since foreigners have vastly more plausible deniability with NOCs, who are not as easy to identify as officially covered officers. It is important to note that if Plame was ever a NOC, her associations overseas were jeopardized long ago by the Agency's decision to allow her to come "inside"—that is, become a headquarters-based officer (even one with a poorly "backstopped" business cover like Plame's Boston front company, Brewster-Jennings & Associates).

This officially sanctioned "outing" of NOCs is a longstanding problem in the CIA, where non-official cover officers regularly tire of their "outsider" existence ("inside" officers dominate the Directorate of Operations). It is not uncommon to find former NOCs serving inside CIA stations and bases in geographic regions where they once served non-officially, which of course immediately destroys the cover legend they used as a NOC. Foreign counterintelligence services naturally assume once a spook always a spook. Since foreign counterespionage organizations often share information about the CIA, this outside-inside transformation of NOCs can readily become known beyond one country's borders.

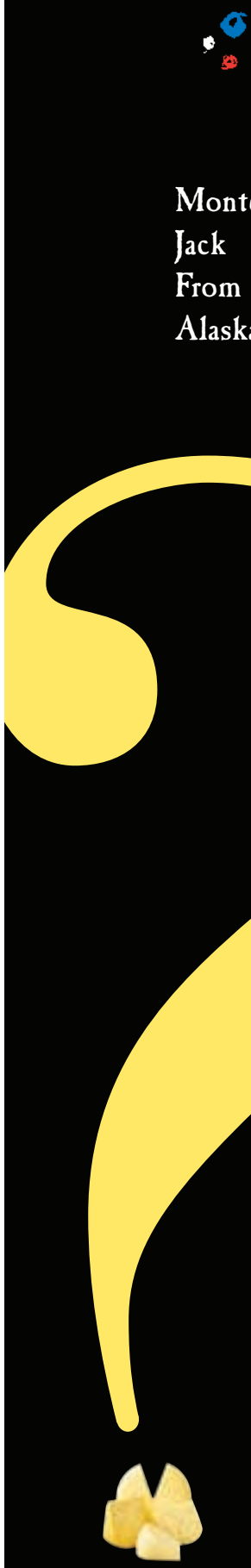
Whether or not Valerie Plame was engaged in serious work inside the Agency's Non-Proliferation Center, one has to ask what in the world her bosses were doing in allowing her husband, a public figure, to accept a non-secret assignment which potentially had a public profile? Journalists regularly learn the names of clandestine-service officers. Senior agency officials may well have thought very little of Ambassador Wilson's "yellowcake" mission to Niger, which explains CIA director George Tenet's statement about his ignorance of it. They may have thought Wilson an ideal candidate for this low-priority, fact-finding mission. But neither is an excuse for employing a spouse of an undercover employee if senior CIA officials thought Plame's clandestine work was valuable. The head of the Non-Proliferation Center ought to be fired for such sloppiness.

Once disabused of their romantic notions about undercover work, outsiders shouldn't find it too hard to start asking pertinent questions about the uses and abuses of CIA cover. Prewar intelligence on Iraq has rightly become a contentious issue. It is obvious now that the Operations Directorate failed to collect high-quality human intelligence against the Iraqi regime's weapons of mass destruction programs. According to congressional and CIA sources, however, there has so far been no comprehensive review of CIA intelligence-collection activities against Saddam Hussein's Iraq. Congressmen on the intelligence oversight committees ought to begin one.

They should ask Tenet how many clandestine officers have worked the Iraqi target since 1991. He and senior officers of the Operations Directorate should be asked to specify what cover Iraq-targeted case officers had and where they served. They should explain how the cover was supposed to aid American intelligence to penetrate Saddam Hussein's Iraq, and why they think the methodologies adopted didn't work.

Saddam Hussein's Iraq was a very difficult target for covert human-intelligence collection. Recruiting spies—or, as is almost always the case, running spies who volunteer their services to the CIA—inside a totalitarian state can be enormously frustrating. However, certain operational tactics make much more sense than others. Having a brigade of case officers on an Iraq Task Force at headquarters or fake-diplomat spooks strolling the cocktail circuit in Europe or Asia isn't the most astute use of manpower.

Setting up front companies to feed Saddam's hunger for biological, chemical, and nuclear weaponry is better. Congressmen on the intelligence committees and their staffs should compare the methodology used against Iraq with that now being



used against the weapons of mass destruction programs in Iran. Intelligence reports by case officers on Iraq's and Iran's WMD efforts should all be reviewed. Who were the foreign agents behind these reports? Did they volunteer or were they recruited? What was the cover and methodology of the recruiting case officer? Were the reports really any good?

The intelligence committees should be even more rigorous in scrutinizing CIA efforts against al Qaeda. It is obvious that the CIA made no decisive recruitment within al Qaeda before the bombings of the U.S. embassies in Africa in 1998 through September 11, 2001. The Counterterrorism Center has grown enormously since 9/11. Has the cover and methodology of CIA officers overseas changed? Are most counterterrorism case officers abroad still using official cover as they were before 9/11?

The intelligence committees should make the clandestine service explain the operational mechanics of its officers overseas. How does the cover used aid the directorate in penetrating al Qaeda and other allied Islamic militant organizations? Or is the Agency really depending upon foreign liaison intelligence services to fight al Qaeda on the ground? If so, how many case officers targeted against Islamic radicalism are declared liaison officers working with a foreign intelligence or internal security services? What exactly is being done by the other non-declared or "unilateral" case officers, who run CIA-only operations. According to active-duty CIA officials, "unilaterals" still represent the vast majority of the CIA's hundreds of counterterrorist case officers.

America's clandestine-service officers would be much more likely to defend us effectively against the threats coming from the Middle East and elsewhere if Congress, the White House, and the press took cover much more *seriously.* Ambassador Wilson is, at least on this one issue, unquestionably right. It is, as any NOC will tell you, the fundamental building block of any successful operation. ♦

Brother, Can You Spare $87 Billion?

A revealing fight over Iraqi reconstruction funds.

BY MATTHEW CONTINETTI

LAST WEEK President Bush invited a group of senators to the White House to discuss his request for $87 billion for reconstruction in Iraq and Afghanistan. The meeting went badly. The bipartisan group favored splitting the $20 billion for reconstruction (the other $67 billion goes to U.S. troops) into a grant and a loan, but the president wouldn't have it. He told the senators that saddling Iraq with more debt would be a terrible decision. "I'm not here to debate it," Bush told Susan Collins of Maine. When senators Olympia Snowe, also of Maine, Maria Cantwell of Washington, and others said their constituents wouldn't tolerate a grant, Bush slammed his hand against the table, saying, "This is bad policy."

Bush had intended to replay his earlier meetings with House Republicans who'd been pushing for a loan. The force of Bush's personality had convinced them that voting against the president wouldn't be in their best interest. "If [Bush's] eyes would have been lasers, mine would have been burned out," Rep. Zach Wamp told reporters. Bush's arm-twisting paid off: The House rejected an attempt to convert the reconstruction aid into a loan by a 226-200 vote.

But senators are prickly, and several at the meeting found the president's demeanor off-putting. In the end, the Senate approved the grant/ loan split by a vote of 51-47. Moderate Republican Lisa Murkowski of Alaska voted for the loan once it was clear that grant proponents were going to lose. More surprising, conservative Sam Brownback of Kansas, usually an ally of the White House, voted for the loan. Brownback, who is up for reelection next year, was at the meeting with Bush. Says one senator who was present, "The meeting with the president harmed more than it helped."

It's also relevant that the loan provision is widely expected to be eliminated before the Iraq package reaches the president's desk. Still, the Senate vote was a blow to Bush, who had fought hard for his $20 billion grant. Bush dispatched Secretary of State Colin Powell and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice to the Hill to lobby for the legislation. Joshua Bolten, Bush's OMB director, also played an important role. And although Ambassador Paul Bremer recently returned to Baghdad, he left two top aides behind in Washington to help shepherd the funds through Congress. "The president feels especially strongly about this issue," says a senior administration official. "He thinks it's dangerous to start playing games with Iraq policy at this moment."

The president's manner may have been abrasive, but he had strong arguments against a loan. Iraq already sits atop a mountain of debt, some $200 billion owed to Saudi Arabia, Germany, Kuwait, and other countries. As Brad Setser, a fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, points out, "It's never a good idea to send someone a bill for the gift that you picked out for them." And forcing the Iraqis to pay back reconstruction aid would only reinforce the idea that the Iraq war was a ploy to profit off that country's oil wealth.

Furthermore, the loan provision pushed through by senators like Indi-

Matthew Continetti is a reporter at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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ana Democrat Evan Bayh and South Carolina Republican Lindsey Graham included a dubious escape valve: The $10 billion loan would turn into a grant if other creditor nations forgave 90 percent of Iraq's debt. A top Senate aide says that's unlikely to happen. Besides, the provision was unwise, according to Sen. John McCain, who opposed turning the appropriation into a loan. "We now place ourselves at the largesse of our 'friends' the French," says McCain. "The United States finds itself in the position of being the world's Blanche Dubois. We'll have to depend on the kindness of strangers."

Still, Bush's rebuff by the Senate on the loan issue obscured a larger victory. Democrats had hoped they would be able to vote separately on the $67 billion for the troops and the $20 billion for reconstruction. But they didn't get the chance, and were forced to vote up or down on the entire $87 billion. The final House vote was 303-125. In the Senate, most Democrats, having secured a victory against the White House on the loan/grant issue, decided to support the overall appropriation. The Senate vote was 87-12.

Republican strategists will find plenty here to work with—especially the majority of House Democrats' voting to deny U.S. soldiers in Iraq equipment and supplies. It's a repeat of last year, when a majority of congressional Democrats voted against a new Department of Homeland Security and could be portrayed as on record "against homeland security."

What's more, many Democratic responses to Bush's $87 billion request display confusion, evasion, even paranoia. Here's House minority leader Nancy Pelosi on the legislation: "Democrats take seriously our constitutional responsibility to provide for the common defense and to protect our troops. We know the United States must succeed in restoring stability in Iraq." Yet Pelosi voted no.

Other Democrats act as if the supplemental budget request were a plot to funnel cash to Halliburton, the industrial giant of which Vice President Cheney was CEO. "I will not support a dime to protect the profits of Halliburton in Iraq," said Sen. Bob Graham of Florida. Sen. John Edwards, who supported the war against Saddam but opposed the supplemental request, ran a television ad saying "$87 billion for Iraq with no plan in sight. Billion dollar giveaways for the president's oil industry friends like Halliburton . . . "

But Halliburton really isn't at issue in the budget request. The question of whether postwar Iraq will be stabilized is at issue. And that question Democrats seem desperate to avoid.

When Democratic presidential candidate Gen. Wesley Clark was asked how he would vote on the $87 billion, he told NBC's Brian Williams, "If I've learned one thing in my nine days in politics, it's you better be careful with hypothetical questions." Clark's big selling point among Democrats is his national security expertise, but he refuses to take a position on the national security issue of the hour. When Howard Dean is asked how he would vote on the $87 billion, he responds, "I'm running for the presidency, not Congress."

There are exceptions, including presidential contenders Gephardt and Lieberman. Missouri congressman Dick Gephardt supported the $87 billion, saying, "We cannot leave Iraq like we did Afghanistan in the 1980s to become a breeding ground for terrorism and home for terrorist training camps." Sen. Joe Lieberman of Connecticut also backed the funding, as did Sen. Joe Biden of Delaware, who's not running for president. Said Biden, "I think we have to." But they are few and far between.

At some level, the Democrats' confusion is understandable. They haven't adjusted to new political realities, like President Bush's knack for upending traditional political categories.

When Congress voted to authorize war in Iraq, Bush turned normally circumspect Republicans into progressive reformers of the Middle East, with a Kennedy-like readiness to "pay any price, bear any burden . . . to assure the survival and the success of liberty." Democrats were left arguing normally conservative positions like prudence, process, and geopolitical stability. When Congress voted to create the Department of Homeland Security, Bush converted the same Republicans who'd voted eight years earlier to dismantle three government departments into advocates of a massive government reorganization and expansion. And when Congress supported Bush's $87 billion for Iraq, frugal conservatives backed massive foreign aid, while notoriously splurge-happy Democrats became deficit hawks.

Some Democrats, like Lieberman and Gephardt, have kept their balance amid the new political categories. Others seem dangerously stuck between Iraq and a hard place. ♦

The Streets of Philadelphia

Will the mayor's race be a Dinkins-Giuliani replay? BY HARRY SIEGEL

AT FIRST GLANCE, we know how the story goes: A big-city black mayor risen from the clubhouse ranks of the longtime ruling party, after four years of presiding over his city's decline, takes on a white Republican reformer in a rematch of their bitter, close-fought first contest. But no matter the parallels with the Dinkins-Giuliani race a decade ago, today's Street-Katz fight in Philadelphia is not New York circa 1993, and here the story may end with renewed disappointment, not urban renewal.

Almost a century after the crusading muckraker Lincoln Steffens described Philadelphia as "corrupt and content," the city still seems enthralled by low expectations. After more than a half century of one-party rule by an increasingly sclerotic Democratic party, the city has a real chance for change—but may settle yet again for corruption.

It says something about Philadelphia that no one who has been paying attention was surprised when, on October 7, Mayor John Street discovered an FBI bug in his office. There are any number of potential scandals the feds might be investigating. There are the Mercedes-driving black Muslims receiving over $4 million from the city to run schools where pipes freeze and unpaid teachers quit mid-year. There is the widespread and openly acknowledged patronage and nepotism (Street's brother received a $1.1 million maintenance contract for the city's airport, revoked after a public outcry). Or perhaps the bug was there to investigate some scandal not yet known—theories abound. The mayor, meanwhile, has made much of being a *subject*, not a *target*, of the investigation and of the timing of the bug with the election—insinuating that the Bush White House is out to destroy a black mayor.


John Street
Earl Keleny

It says a lot about Philadelphia that the discovery of the bug seems to have given Mayor Street a boost in the polls.

In such an atmosphere of victimhood and paranoia, is there still a chance for challenger Sam Katz to repeat the Giuliani revival in Philly?

Katz, who made his fortune as a financial consultant for cities, including Philadelphia, has some serious prescriptions for the city's troubles. Mainly, he wants to arrest widespread expectations of decline and mediocrity. "The perception is that big cities have to lose their populations," he notes, "but every top city in America except two—Philadelphia and Detroit—has gained population in the 1990s." He points to three key problems—the city's high crime rate and low quality of life, the consequent flight of the young and college educated, and a tax system that leans heavily on businesses. The flight of businesses and upwardly mobile young people effectively serves the interests of the worst elements of the local Democratic party, creating a self-selecting electorate in which those who don't like how the city is run leave, while the rest are willing to lump it.

"Just look at City Line Avenue," says Katz. "Stand on one side, the city side, where there is the business-privilege tax and the wage tax"—city surtaxes on business and personal income. "You have 200,000 square feet of offices. Now go to the other side, where there is no business-privilege tax and wage tax, and you have 2.6 million square feet of office space. These are the businesses that left Philadelphia. . . . Our tax structure created [satellite cities] Cherry Hill and King of Prussia." One recent study found that 60 percent of those considering leaving the city listed the tax burden as their main motivation.

In a city where many fear their arm might fall off if used to pull the lever for a Republican, Street has tried to run against Bush as much as Katz. In the last debate, he used the word Republican more than 30 times before I lost count ("My Republican opponent with a very Republican plan").

Harry Siegel, a Brooklyn-based journalist, is writing a book on gentrification in New York.

To quote Frank Keel, a Street campaign spokesman, "Pennsylvania is critical to Bush's reelection hopes. . . . So is it inconceivable that something like [the FBI bug] could be triggered by the Republicans, in an effort to win Philadelphia, in an effort to help George W. Bush get reelected? I don't know. I would speculate that it's possible."

Ironically, Street catapulted to public notice in the late 1970s as a councilman who kept his hands clean during Abscam, the FBI investigation into corruption best remembered for agents dressed as Arab sheikhs offering bags of money to local politicians. After the arrest of three councilmen and two Philadelphia congressmen, Street formed an ethics committee dedicated to cleaning up the city's political culture.

But as mayor, he has skillfully manipulated the system of pay-for-play politics. This came out in a series of George Washington Plunkitt-like remarks during the last debate, which aired on a morning radio show, with breaks on the twos for traffic and weather. The mayor cheerfully agreed with Katz that contributors to the Street campaign "have a greater chance of getting business from my administration," going on to explain that "there are these rules that have been informally accepted in this country for as long as there's been government, as long as there's been patronage. . . . That's how the game is played—with qualified firms getting deals."

Or, as Plunkitt, the great practitioner and chronicler of Tammany politics, put it: "I've been readin' a book by Lincoln Steffens on *The Shame of the Cities*. Steffens means well but, like all reformers, he don't know how to make distinctions. He can't see no difference between honest graft and dishonest graft and, consequent, he gets things all mixed up."

In a similar spirit, Street labeled Katz a "hypocrite" for taking him to task for such favoritism. Later in the debate, he mocked his opponent's refusal to accept clubhouse realities in a schoolyard-like singsong—"You're innocent? You're just a man running for mayor, and you haven't done anything? These big bullies are pushing you around?"

Those big bullies may have stolen the last election—and they may be trying to do it again. In 1999, Street won by 7,000 votes in perhaps the only city in America to have a roughly one-to-one ratio of registered to eligible voters. Lest anyone confuse Philadelphia with a bastion of participatory democracy, as many as 100,000 of the registrations are thought to be falsified. Two homeless men I talked to, one of them a Democratic operative before becoming a drug addict, told me that the Street campaign in 1999 had rounded up homeless men and ne'er-do-wells, driven them to the polls, and paid them $10 to $15 for their votes.

Ironically, Street catapulted to public notice in the late 1970s as a councilman who kept his hands clean during Abscam.

This year, the mayor's election team organized for a far right candidate in an effort to siphon votes from Katz (the candidate was thrown off the ballot for phony signatures). And the potential for fraud is rife, as always. As John Fund pointed out in a recent *Wall Street Journal* piece, the Democrats control the poll machinery in most precincts, and the city has a system in which people "who have not voted in the last two general elections are marked with an asterisk on the official voter rolls for each precinct. This is a roadmap for people who want to arrange for others to vote in their place."

Still, Street has real vulnerabilities. He has taken little more than baby steps to deal with crime. Imagine Giuliani boasting that because he responded to open air drug markets, "the drug dealers have had no choice but to go inside." When Katz pointed out that rape, murder, and aggravated assault are up sharply in West and North Philly over the last year, Street sneered, "Sam, you aren't out there enough to know if people feel safe in these neighborhoods. The only time you show up there is when it's time to run for mayor."

Part of the problem voters face is that neither candidate is very likable. Street comes off as private, harsh, and contentious, while Katz often seems too wonky for public life. His campaign team plied me with quality research—with bombshells deeply buried in dull-as-dirt language—much of which had failed to gain traction in the local press. In the radio debate, which allowed for direct responses, Katz spent far too much time complaining about the format and Street's incivility.

Katz is hoping that his ace in the hole is the union endorsements he's received this time around (he was practically shut out by the unions in 1999) combined with a much stronger focus on his get-out-the-vote operation. Last time, he says, "I lost because I failed to mobilize people." This time he's hired Daryl Fox, who worked extremely successful Election Days for New York mayors Giuliani and Bloomberg, to run his turnout effort.

Mostly, though, Katz has to hope that the bug doesn't become an excuse for voters to bear out Lincoln Steffens's analysis in the 21st century, as they did in the 20th. "The Philadelphia machine isn't the best. It isn't sound, and I doubt if it would stand in New York or Chicago," said Steffens. "The enduring strength of the typical American political machine is that it is a natural growth—a sucker, but deep-rooted in the people. The New Yorkers vote for Tammany Hall. The Philadelphians do not vote; they are disfranchised, and their disfranchisement is one anchor of the foundation of the Philadelphia organization." ♦

Mother Teresa's Family Tree

Everyone in the Balkans wants a piece of her.

BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

OCTOBER 19 IS THE DAY the Roman Catholic Church will mark the beatification of Ganxhe Agnes Bojaxhiu, the Albanian woman known to the world as Mother Teresa. Beatification is the last step before canonization, or sainthood, and the occasion is one of celebration for Catholics around the world.

Others should celebrate with equal fervor. Mother Teresa offered an exceptional example of self-sacrifice for the betterment of others. The vocation of her Missionaries of Charity is to care for the poorest of the poor.

But Mother Teresa's beatification has provoked a bizarre controversy in the city of her birth, where two ethnic factions are fighting to claim her. Impenetrable though it may seem to outsiders, this little uproar illustrates the enduring bad blood between Slavs and Albanians—and shows why American peacekeepers, though they may soon be withdrawn from Bosnia-Herzegovina, must remain in Kosovo.

Mother Teresa was born in 1910 in the 2,000-year-old city of Skopje, then part of the Ottoman Empire. Today, Skopje is the capital of the Republic of Macedonia, a statelet of 2 million people that gained its independence in 1991 with the breakup of Yugoslavia. (Because the Greeks vehemently object to its use of the name Macedonia—which they consider their property; the father of Alexander the Great was Philip of Macedon—this small country joined the U.N. as the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and is known in international-speak by the hideous handle "the FYROM.")

Macedonia—for which the French and Italians named a salad combining many vegetables or fruits chopped into little pieces—is nothing if not Balkanized. Its population is roughly 60 percent Slavs, most of them Orthodox Christians, some of them Muslims; and 40 percent other, of whom

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most are ethnic Albanians, most of them Muslims, about a fifth Roman Catholics, a few Orthodox. The rest of the "other" are Turks, Gypsies, Bulgarians, Serbs, and so on.

Mother Teresa came from an old Catholic Albanian family, in a part of the world that was Albanian before it was Slav, and Christian long before it was Muslim. (The Slavs arrived around 600 A.D.; Islam arrived with the Ottoman invader in the 14th century.) But late last summer, Macedonian Slavs began to question her ethnic identity, maintaining she was a Slav or even a Serb—anything but Albanian.

This exercise in celebrity ethnic cleansing came to a head in the plan to donate a statue of Ganxhe Agnes Bojaxhiu to the city of Rome, a copy of a statue already standing in Skopje. The inscription would identify Mother Teresa as a "daughter of Macedonia" in the Cyrillic script used by Macedonian Slavs. The Albanian language is written in the Latin alphabet.

Such gestures are charged in Macedonia. Only two years ago, an Albanian insurgency in the country was resolved by European intervention, with U.S. diplomatic backing, and Albanian cultural rights were finally recognized, at least on paper. Because most of them are Muslims, the Albanians have been alleged by fearmongers to be al Qaeda supporters. But this could hardly be further from the truth. Their Islam is culturally Ottoman and European, entirely accepting of pluralism and modernity. What's more, Albanians everywhere remain lovers of America, because of our rescue of their brethren in Kosovo in 1999 and, before that, our help extended repeatedly through the twentieth century to assure Albanian independence. Woodrow Wilson is a figure they revere. After September 11, some 5,000 Kosovar Albanians volunteered to fight alongside us in Afghanistan.

In the weird media debate that erupted in Macedonia over Mother Teresa, the specter of radical Islam was invoked. The *New York Times* added to the paranoia. In a piece that seemed to legitimize doubt about Mother Teresa's origins, reporter Ian Fisher wrote, "Mother Teresa was Roman Catholic, while most Albanians are Muslim, and this has opened a crack for speculation about Mother Teresa's actual ethnic roots." Fisher quoted various Slav Macedonians arguing that Mother Teresa's father was probably a Vlach. Americans have never heard of Vlachs, a small Balkan ethnic group speaking a language close to Romanian. Vlachs herd sheep and seldom come down from their mountain pastures.

Drew Friedman

Mother Teresa

Another argument trotted out by anti-Albanian forces was that because Ganxhe Bojaxhiu's brother had the first name "Lazar," the family may have been Serbian. Tsar Lazar was a noted 14th-century Serbian ruler. But Lazar was also the first name of some of the most famous Albanians of recent times, including Lazar Fundo, an early anti-Stalinist martyred by the Communists; Lazar Shantoja, a Catholic poet tortured and executed by the Marxist regime of Enver Hoxha in 1945; and Lazar Gusho, the greatest modern Albanian poet, whom the Communists allowed to live to the age of 88 only because he pretended to be crazy.

The family name Bojaxhiu belongs to none of these argumentative ethnic groups, but is a Turkish word meaning "dyer" or "painter." It also occurs among Sephardic Jews and Armenians, people who are neither Albanian, nor Slav, nor Muslim.

Albanians naturally reacted with indignation to the attempt to appropriate one of their slender list of global stars. Mother Teresa was among the few non-Communist Albanians famous outside the Balkans, along with the Belushi brothers. No Macedonian Slavs are famous outside their corner of the world, which must be why the Slavic Macedonians are so eager to claim Mother Teresa as one of their own.

In the end, the controversy killed the project, and the statue was never sent to Rome. So why should Americans care? Only because the absurdity of such quarrels shows how irritable Slavs and Albanians in the southern Balkan states remain with one another. Slav Macedonian politicians have been especially irresponsible in stirring the pot, as Albanians draw ahead in economic entrepreneurship. The moral of the story: It is unlikely these groups will accept very soon the ways of inter-ethnic civility.

By contrast, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croats, Serbs, and Muslims have largely moved on from their recent bloody wars, to an attitude supportive of peaceful development. U.S. troops can and should be withdrawn from Bosnian territory (with the added benefit of relieving pressure on the U.S. military at a time when it is stretched), though their withdrawal is impossible in Kosovo.

This week, as believers are honoring Mother Teresa, guns remain cocked in the land of her birth. And across the border to the north, in Kosovo, American soldiers are required to maintain ethnic peace—so that good Samaritans like the Missionaries of Charity can come to the aid of people in need without the slightest regard to ethnic background. ♦

The ABCs of AIDS

The importance of the Ugandan experience.

BY JOSEPH LOCONTE

RANDALL TOBIAS, President Bush's pick to oversee his $15 billion AIDS initiative for Africa and the Caribbean, sailed through his recent confirmation vote in the U.S. Senate—only to find himself at the center of a controversial bid to reshape America's AIDS policy overseas.

President Bush invokes the experience of Uganda—the most successful country at confronting the disease—as the paradigm for key portions of his AIDS initiative. Uganda has "shown the world what is possible" in preventing the spread of HIV, Bush said when Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni visited the White House. Indeed, a decade's worth of research confirms a result that has startled the AIDS establishment: From 1991 to 2000, Uganda reduced its national HIV infection rate from about 21 percent to 6 percent among pregnant women. In Kampala, the rate dropped from 30 percent to 10 percent.

How did a poor, war-torn nation with a tiny health care budget take the lead in HIV/AIDS prevention? The answer goes to the heart of the political fight likely to ensnare Tobias and the administration.

When the epidemic emerged as a problem in Uganda, President Museveni, who came to power in 1986, launched an all-fronts campaign to discourage behavior that spreads the AIDS virus. Government officials enlisted religious leaders to join them in delivering a consistent AIDS message: Abstain from sex or be faithful to your partner. Failing that, use a condom—or die. They called the campaign "ABC"—Abstain, Be faithful, or, as a last resort, use a Condom. Within a few years, Uganda had developed what researchers call a "social vaccine" against HIV: cultural norms about sexual responsibility, preached in clinics and public schools, as well as churches and mosques.

Proud of his country's achievement, Museveni rejects the Western priority on condom distribution—as if "only a thin piece of rubber stands between us and the death of our continent." Rather, he says, "we made it our highest priority to convince our people to return to their traditional values of chastity and faithfulness or, failing that, to use condoms." Ugandans have a colorful term for their goal of fidelity to a single partner: "zero grazing."

Research confirming the effectiveness of Uganda's behavior-based model comes from an unlikely quarter: the very health organizations that champion "safe sex" and condom distribution. The list includes the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the World Health Organization, and the Harvard School of Public Health. Most researchers now agree that 9 out of 10 Ugandan adults changed their behavior to avoid the disease.

Abstinence and marital fidelity were the most important changes, according to a recent study by Daniel Low-Beer and Rand L. Stoneburner in the *African Journal of AIDS Research*. Even teenagers, in large numbers, delayed having sex. Condom use among high-risk groups, such as those involved in commercial sex, apparently played a much smaller role. "Many of us in the AIDS and public health communities didn't believe that abstinence and faithfulness were realistic goals," says Edward Green, a medical anthropologist at Harvard with 30 years' experience in Africa and Latin America. "It now seems we were wrong. The Ugandan model has the most to teach the rest of the world."

The question still outstanding is whether the rest of the world is willing to listen.

The president's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, approved by Congress earlier this year, challenges wealthy countries to focus on 14 nations, most of them in Africa, where 29 million people are dying of AIDS or infected with the HIV virus. Most of the U.S. money (55 percent) goes toward treatment. There's also money for a previously ignored group, AIDS orphans, of whom some 11 million live in Africa.

The White House plan, however, sets aside at least 20 percent of the funds for prevention, one-third of it earmarked for abstinence-based programs—at a time when most health organizations and donor agencies are flooding countries with condoms, needle-exchanges, HIV test kits, and safe-sex media campaigns. The Global HIV Prevention Working Group, convened by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, omits any reference to the ABC program in its 2002 report describing Uganda. Amazingly, it credits the government's success to "extensive condom promotion."

This commitment to "safe sex" seems impervious to hard evidence. A UNAIDS study published in 2001, for example, found that condoms made no significant difference in HIV prevalence. A UNAIDS review released earlier this year saw "no definite examples" of generalized epidemics turned back by prevention programs relying primarily on condoms. Condom use remains relatively low in Uganda, while nations with the highest levels of condom availability—Zimbabwe, Botswana, South Africa—have the world's highest HIV prevalence rates.

But however clear the evidence, and however sound the administration's rhetoric so far, it is uncertain whether Bush's team can actually alter U.S. AIDS policy on the ground. Federal lawmakers are now debating language

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affecting the distribution of AIDS funds. The modest earmark for abstinence-based programs is one of the critics' targets; another is a provision encouraging the involvement of faith-based organizations, including a "conscience clause" protecting their right to administer AIDS money in accord with their religious beliefs. Catholic clinics, for example, do not distribute condoms. Jim Kolbe, the Republican congressman from Arizona, has introduced language striking protections for faith-based groups and casting doubt on the funding for prevention.

Such fierce opposition should come as no surprise: Grant managers have a history of balking at religious programs that promote responsible sexual behavior. But it is particularly self-defeating in Africa, where weak public-health systems are supplemented by large numbers of church-based clinics and workers affiliated with medical charities. "Many of the faith-based organizations have been on the ground for years," says JoAnne Lyon, executive director of World Hope International, an evangelical group working with 250 churches in Zambia to help AIDS orphans. "We bring a network of relationships . . . and a belief that people and structures can be transformed."

Bush's critics aren't buying it. They demand that every penny of U.S. assistance continue to flow through health care providers who hold the opposite view: that high-risk behavior is difficult or impossible to change. These providers already receive most international AIDS money. They invest it in "risk reduction" programs, which by any fair assessment tend to legitimize promiscuity, prostitution, and illegal drug use.

Plainly, Bush's AIDS chief will face stiff resistance to the disbursement of money to new players. At his confirmation hearing, Tobias said he endorsed Uganda's emphasis on abstinence and marital fidelity. Democrat Russ Feingold interrupted him—unable to tolerate this deviation from public-health orthodoxy—and insisted that condoms had played a crucial role. "I don't accept that characterization," Feingold said. "The lessons of Uganda must not be changed from what actually happened."

Tobias should not be intimidated. The president's approach has formidable backers. "Faith-based organizations remain a great untapped potential in the global fight against AIDS," says Harvard's Edward Green, author of *Rethinking AIDS Prevention: Learning from Successes in Developing Countries* (2003). "They ought to be given more support in doing what they do best, namely, supporting fidelity and abstinence." ♦

"Under God"

The history of a phrase

By James Piereson

The United States Supreme Court has now agreed to review the ruling from the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in California that challenged the use of the phrase "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance. To nearly everyone's surprise, the lower court held that the recitation of the pledge in public schools constitutes an "endorsement of religion," in violation of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. As a result of this decision, public schools in the nine western states under the jurisdiction of the Ninth Circuit are forbidden to hold pledge exercises for their students. The Supreme Court will render a decision by next June.

The Ninth Circuit's decision was met by sharp criticism when it was announced last year. After all, there were few precedents for such a ruling. The Supreme Court has ruled in the past that ceremonial references to God in public places and institutions do not represent an establishment of religion. The Court has never blinked, for example, at the use of Bibles in courtrooms or the phrase "In God We Trust" on our coins or even the singing of "God Bless America" in public places. Yet the Ninth Circuit's ruling, if upheld, would almost certainly be applied to these situations, too; indeed, the plaintiff in the case, Michael Newdow, has argued for precisely such an application.

A surprising number of Americans nonetheless felt that the judges had a good point—that the reference to God in the pledge was an inappropriate endorsement of religion on the part of the government. Atheists and agnostics, they pointed out, were offended by this unnecessary reference to God in a patriotic pledge, as were adherents of exotic religions who may not worship a monotheistic God. Why should they be required to endorse the religious doctrines of the majority?

Conservatives, on the other hand, saw the decision as just the latest example of a liberal court run amok, imposing the personal views of judges on the Constitution in defiance of tradition, precedent, and common sense. Some called for the impeachment of the judges who had issued the ruling. Even the editors of the *New York Times*, who can usually be relied upon to take the most liberal positions on church-state issues, felt that the ruling was imprudent and impolitic. The Senate passed a resolution by a vote of 99-0 expressing support for the Pledge of Allegiance and its reference to "one nation under God." Most observers looked for a decisive reversal from the Supreme Court.

That assessment may turn out to have been premature. It is entirely possible that we could wake up some morning next June to learn that the Supreme Court has decided that the Pledge of Allegiance, in its current form, cannot be recited in the public schools. To understand why requires a closer look at the Ninth Circuit's decision.

In arriving at its decision, the Court of Appeals placed great weight on the fact that Congress inserted the words "under God" into the pledge in 1954 as a means of advancing religion at a time when the nation was engaged in a battle against the doctrines of atheistic communism. The court further noted that when President Eisenhower signed the bill, he stated, "From this day forward, the millions of our schoolchildren will daily proclaim . . . the dedication of our Nation and our people to the Almighty." From the Ninth Circuit's point of view, the record amply demonstrated that the purpose of the act was not to advance patriotism (a legitimate secular goal), but rather to promote religion.

The court also ruled that the inclusion of "under God" in the pledge represents an unconstitutional endorsement of religion by government, particularly when the oath is recited by a captive audience of students in a public school. This conclusion was, in truth, not nearly so radical as some critics have claimed, since the Supreme Court itself has, in recent decades, moved very far in the direction of construing an "endorsement" of religion as an "establishment" of religion. Indeed, in a shrewd albeit somewhat obvious tactical feint, the Court of Appeals was able to draw support from no less an authority than Justice Sandra Day O'Connor—often the swing vote between the Court's liberal and conservative blocs—who is on record as saying that the Establishment Clause prohibits government from endorsing religion. Here the Ninth Circuit ruling quoted at

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length from O'Connor's concurring opinion in *Lynch* v. *Donnelly* (1984):

> The Establishment Clause prohibits government from making adherence to a religion relevant in any way to a person's standing in the political community. Government can run afoul of that prohibition in two principal ways. One is excessive entanglement with religious institutions. . . .The second and more direct infringement is government endorsement or disapproval of religion. Endorsement sends a message to nonadherents that they are outsiders, not full members of the political community.

These words are reasonably clear, and one has to concede that the judges on the lower court did not have to stretch O'Connor's doctrine all that far to reach the conclusion that the pledge, with its current wording, represents an endorsement (and thus an establishment) of religion. Still, these judges were more than a little disingenuous in citing her opinion as a ruling authority in this case, since this doctrine has not yet been endorsed by a majority of justices on the Supreme Court. Nor has O'Connor used her doctrine to clear away entanglements between religion and government. Indeed, in the case cited by the Ninth Circuit, she ruled that a local government could display a manger scene on public property during Christmas season. Such displays, she concluded, did not rise to the level of an unconstitutional endorsement of religion.

Perhaps Justice O'Connor will find that the judges on the Ninth Circuit abused her words to reach their conclusion. But, if this is so, perhaps she will also recognize that the doctrine outlined in *Lynch* provides little guidance as to what kinds of endorsement of religion do violate the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. In any case, all the justices (minus Scalia, who has recused himself) must now decide if Congress exceeded its powers when it inserted "under God" into the Pledge of Allegiance.

Before this happens, however, it might be helpful to look a little more deeply into the actual history of the pledge. Why do we have the pledge in the first place? Where did Congress find the phrase "under God?" And is it true, as the Ninth Circuit implied, that the phrase, as inserted into the pledge, has no patriotic significance? These are questions worth pondering.

The Pledge of Allegiance was written in 1892 by Francis Bellamy, a Massachusetts educator who headed a committee of civic leaders that was in charge of planning Columbus Day celebrations to mark the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America. The pledge, then as now, was a statement of national principle emphasizing the post-Civil War themes of the permanence of the American union and the liberty of all of her people. The pledge, in addition, promoted patriotism and national unity during a period when the country was attracting more than 500,000 immigrants a year.

On Columbus Day 1892, several million schoolchildren across the nation recited Bellamy's pledge: "I pledge allegiance to my flag, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." It was a secular oath, with no mention of God or religion. Nor as it gained popularity did anyone, so far as is known, complain that the pledge was excessively secular. It soon became customary for children across the nation to recite the pledge at the beginning of the school day.

There was some concern, however, that the words "my flag" might cause some confusion among the large number of immigrants who were coming to America in the early years of the century. Such words, it was feared, might unwittingly encourage loyalty to the various immigrant homelands. In 1924, therefore, the National Flag Conference approved a slight change of wording in the pledge to clarify that reference. Now the pledge read: "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

The Pledge of Allegiance continued to grow in popularity after this alteration. Many states enacted legislation to require the recitation of the pledge in public schools. It received official recognition in 1942 when Congress included the pledge in the U.S. Flag Code. In 1943, the Jehovah's Witnesses challenged the mandatory recitation of the pledge in public schools. In a landmark case, the Supreme Court ruled that governments could not force students to participate in the flag salute against their will or contrary to their beliefs—a ruling that remains the law of the land today.

The final alteration in the pledge occurred, as noted, in 1954, when Congress inserted the reference to God, so that now the pledge referred to "one nation under God." The addition of these words was not the least bit controversial at the time; nor was it the only religious reference approved by Congress in this period. In 1955, by a unanimous vote, Congress required the U.S. Mint to place on all currency the words "In God We Trust," which had previously appeared only on coins. The next year Congress adopted this phrase as our national motto. Few people at the time entertained the possibility that such enactments might run afoul of the First Amendment.

Where, then, did Congress find the words, "under God?" It is certainly true that, over the generations, many American statesmen have expressed gratitude for the blessings of God or have invoked the protection of the Almighty, though in doing so few have used the particular phrase, "under God." Where did it come from?

The proximate origins of "under God" are familiar to most Americans, because it is heard in Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. Schoolchildren who over the generations have memorized Lincoln's speech know very well that Congress did not just pull these words out of the air in 1954.

When Lincoln traveled to Gettysburg in November 1863 to dedicate a national cemetery as the final resting place for those who had died in the battle there three months before, he tried to find words that might provide deeper purpose and meaning to the terrible carnage of the Civil War. The war began as a struggle to save the Union, but had grown into a war to end slavery. Was it about something more?

After describing the purpose of the occasion and paying tribute to the soldiers who had died, Lincoln turned to the responsibilities of the living:

> It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to the cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

It is entirely understandable that Lincoln's immortal speech should have inserted into the national consciousness a number of words and phrases of lasting influence—one such phrase being, of course, "under God." It is a phrase which was very rarely used before 1863, but very frequently used in the years and decades afterward, thanks to the Gettysburg Address. Lincoln apparently inserted "under God" into the speech at the last minute, perhaps while he was sitting on the stage waiting for his turn to speak, since the words did not appear in the written draft that he prepared before embarking on his trip to Gettysburg, nor did they appear in the copy of the speech that he carried to the ceremony. Nevertheless, all who heard the speech agreed that he had used the words "under God." And Lincoln himself included the phrase in subsequent copies of the speech that he wrote out in longhand in the days and weeks after it was delivered.

The words themselves, as Lincoln used them, are subject to varying though not necessarily inconsistent interpretations. The most obvious meaning is that the United States exists not only under the protection of God, but also under His judgment—thus implying that the nation must conduct itself according to the standards of divine justice, or suffer the consequences. This is a theme that Lincoln developed some 15 months later in his Second Inaugural Address, where he suggested, with numerous references to the Bible, that the war was a punishment visited by God on both North and South for complicity in the offense of slavery. This "great Civil War," as Lincoln called it at Gettysburg, was a reminder that the Almighty does in fact watch over our affairs.

Lincoln was, moreover, acutely conscious of the fact that the course of the war had not followed the intentions or designs of any individual, party, or section, but had followed a logic entirely of its own. The scale of the conflict seemed beyond human control, which he took to be a sign that events were following a divine plan of some kind. "The Almighty has His own purposes," as Lincoln would later say in his Second Inaugural Address.

Lincoln also understood, as much as anyone, that the constitutional structure created by the Founding Fathers had failed, in the end, to maintain the Union. Some in the North condemned the Constitution as "a bargain with the devil," because of its concessions to slavery; others in the South condemned the self-evident truths of the Declaration of Independence as "self-evident lies." Many Americans, he concluded, had begun to take their institutions for granted, and to view them as instruments which might or might not be useful in the pursuit of other goals—in this case, either the expansion or the destruction of slavery.

Lincoln tried to address this crisis by promoting a civil religion among Americans, under which a sacred aura would be attached to our institutions and to the patriots whose sacrifices had made them possible. He frequently described the Declaration of Independence as "the sheet anchor of American republicanism," as "the immortal emblem of humanity," and, more to the point, as "the political religion of the nation." The Revolution, in Lincoln's view, ought to be understood by Americans as a sacred event, while the Declaration and the Constitution ought to be seen as sacred documents, to be read and debated with the same kind of reverence with which one approaches a sacred religious text. In the Gettysburg Address, Lincoln sought to add the Civil War itself, and its battles and battlefields, along with the fallen dead, to the nation's calendar of sacred events. By associating our institutions with sacred images, Lincoln tried to provide a glue for the Union that the Founding Fathers did not think was necessary. And by reminding his countrymen that their

nation exists "under God," he tried to reinforce this sacred association and thus advance his ideal of an American civil religion.

There is, finally, another meaning to this reference to God that Lincoln may have borrowed from Thomas Jefferson, whose writings Lincoln studied with great care. In his *Notes on the State of Virginia*, which Jefferson wrote at Monticello in 1781, he considered the question of slavery in connection with the broader liberties of free citizens. He there raised a question that continues to surprise those who believe that Jefferson's views were entirely secular:

> And can [Jefferson asked] the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with His wrath? Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever.

This powerful statement is not merely a condemnation of slavery, but also an assertion that the survival of liberty is intimately connected to the public recognition of God. Jefferson, who originated the concept of a wall of separation between church and state, says here not only that our liberties are a gift of God, but also that citizens must recognize this fact if they are to preserve those liberties.

The existence of slavery seemed to imply that human liberty was but a conventional right, to be granted or denied by groups of men according to who happened to hold power at any moment. The institution of slavery therefore encouraged the belief among the people that their liberty was granted by men according to convenience or interest, rather than by God owing to their nature as God's creatures. For if liberty is a gift of God, as Jefferson said it was, both here and in the Declaration of Independence, why is it not granted to slaves, too? He feared that by accepting slavery for some, Americans had undermined the foundations of liberty for all.

Lincoln's Gettysburg Address and his Second Inaugural may be read, in some part, as extended responses to the fears Jefferson expressed and to the questions he raised. We have already noted that Lincoln understood the Civil War as divine punishment for the offense of slavery—his acknowledgment of Jefferson's ominous presentiment that, "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever."

Then there is Jefferson's striking assertion that the liberties of the nation have but one solid foundation—"a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the gift of God." In the concluding passage to the Gettysburg Address, Lincoln urged his audience to resolve "that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth." What did Lincoln mean by "a new birth of freedom?" And why did he say that this new birth of freedom had to occur "under God?"

The original birth of freedom occurred when the Declaration of Independence was ratified as the founding document of the nation. In the opening-line arithmetic of the Gettysburg Address ("four score and seven years ago"), Lincoln traced the founding of the nation to this event. Jefferson, however, understood that the nation was born with a contradiction that tended to obscure the fact that the nation's liberties are a gift of God. And thus he feared that the experiment might fail. The Civil War, which would end slavery, provided the opportunity for a "new birth of freedom" that was not undermined or contaminated by any such contradiction. Still, that "new birth of freedom" had to be established on a firm basis that would remind the people of its ultimate origin. The words "under God," when linked to this "new birth of freedom," provide that reminder.

But where did Lincoln find the locution, "under God?" Was the phrase his own creation, like many other of the memorable images that are found in his speeches? Or did he find the phrase elsewhere?

William Barton, in a wonderful little book titled *Lincoln at Gettysburg* (1930), provided a surprising answer to this question. In his research, Barton looked into just about everything Lincoln did and said on that memorable day in Gettysburg, including the origins of his most memorable lines.

Barton allowed that the phrase "under God" probably existed in Lincoln's "own stock of phraseology," which he had accumulated over a lifetime of careful reading. Nevertheless, Barton suggests that Lincoln originally found the words in Parson Weems's biography of George Washington, a book that Lincoln acknowledged he had read as a boy. This book, Barton says, was one of young Lincoln's favorites, along with the Bible, *Pilgrim's Progress*, and *Robinson Crusoe*.

"Under God" was one of those phrases that Weems liked to use, and it appeared frequently in his biography of Washington. When Washington delivered his Farewell Address, for example, Weems noted the effect on the public of the president's impending retirement: "To be thus

bidden farewell by one to whom, in every time of danger, they had so long and fondly looked up, as under God, their surest and safest friend, could not but prove to them a grievous shock." On Washington's death, Weems wrote (as quoted by Barton): "Sons and daughters of Columbia, gather yourselves together around the bed of your expiring father—around the last bed of him to whom you and your children owe, under God, many of the best blessings of this life."

It is thus quite likely, as Barton suggests, that Lincoln picked up the phrase "under God" as a young boy while reading *The Life of George Washington*. It was thus available as part of his intellectual equipment once he grew to manhood. But Barton goes further, and suggests that both Lincoln and Weems might have picked up the phrase from still another source—General Washington himself.

On July 2, 1776, as British troops assembled on Staten Island and the Continental Congress met to ratify the Declaration of Independence, Washington was rallying his troops on Long Island in preparation for a series of battles that would take place later that summer in and around New York City. In the General Orders that he circulated to his men that day, Washington wrote:

"The time is now near at hand which must probably determine whether Americans are to be freemen or slaves. . . . The fate of unborn millions will now depend, under God, on the courage and conduct of this army."

One week later, on July 9, Washington issued another set of orders, but now he was aware that the Continental Congress had approved the Declaration of Independence and had announced it to the public five days before. This document, which declared the official separation of the United States from Great Britain, was also, in effect, a declaration of war. On this occasion, he directed that the Declaration be read to the troops "with an audible voice."

Washington then expressed his hope that "this important Event will serve as a fresh incentive to every officer and soldier to act with fidelity and courage, as knowing that now the peace and safety of the Country depends, under God, solely on the success of our arms."

It is surprising, then, but also perhaps perfectly appropriate, that the now controversial phrase, "under God," had its origins with George Washington in the very week that the United States declared its national independence. It is not altogether clear what precisely Washington had in mind when he used these words. Perhaps, like Lincoln, he understood the phrase to carry many layers of meaning—an appeal for God's guidance and protection, an acknowledgment of God's sovereignty, an assertion that our liberties derive from God, a recognition that God's work on earth must be our own. Washington's words and deeds, of course, carried enormous weight in the early years of the Republic, and thus it is likely that this reference was widely noted and circulated among Americans of that time. In this way it was absorbed into our "national stock of phraseology" from which it was picked up by later writers like Parson Weems and statesmen like Abraham Lincoln.

It is also possible, and perhaps even likely, that Lincoln found the phrase "under God" through his own reading of Washington's orders—and used the phrase at Gettysburg because he knew that Washington himself had used it in connection with the Declaration of Independence. There is a small but suggestive piece of evidence for this speculation. In Washington's General Orders of July 9, 1776, he wrote that "the peace and safety of the Country now depends, under God, solely on the success of our arms." In his Second Inaugural Address, Lincoln, before he expounded on his understanding of the war, took note of the military situation. "The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself." There is enough similarity between these two statements to suggest that Lincoln had read Washington's orders—and drew the phrase "under God" from that source.

The nation, of course, has undergone great changes since the time of Washington and even Lincoln. Then, the United States was overwhelmingly a Protestant country; today, early in the 21st century, it is home to people holding an almost infinite variety of religious views. Though the United States remains the most religious of all Western nations, our public life is increasingly secular, and our people are not nearly as God-fearing as they were at the time of the Revolution and the Civil War. Our diversity and secularity have eroded the broad religious consensus that once existed in the nation. Many thoughtful Americans believe, therefore, that today the use of religious references in public ceremonies tends more to divide than to unify our people.

At the same time, the words "under God" in the pledge serve to remind Americans of their heritage of liberty, and the price that was paid to maintain it. Washington in the Revolution, Jefferson at Monticello, Lincoln at Gettysburg—all invoked a common spiritual image, and Washington and Lincoln explicitly and with deliberate purpose used the words "under God." When Congress added these words to the Pledge of Allegiance, it drew upon a phrase that had a long and meaningful association with the great statesmen and events in the history of the Republic.

Can the Supreme Court now strike down "under God" without at the same time striking at the very foundations of our national existence? Or has the nation changed to the point where we no longer believe such an image to be true or, even, useful to sustain our institutions? ♦

The (Finally) Emerging Republican Majority

GOP officials don't like to talk about it, but they have become the dominant party.

By Fred Barnes

After the 1972 and 1980 elections, Republicans said political realignment across the country would soon make them the dominant party. It didn't happen. Now, despite highly favorable signs in the 2002 midterm elections and the California recall, Republicans fear a jinx. Realignment? they ask. What realignment?

Matthew Dowd, President Bush's polling expert, notes heavy Republican turnout in 2002 and the recall, a splintering of the Democratic coalition, Republican gains among Latinos, and shrinking Democratic voter identification—all unmistakable signs of realignment. But he won't call it realignment. Whoa! says Bill McInturff, one of the smartest Republican strategists, let's not be premature. Before anyone claims realignment has put Republicans in control nationally, McInturff says, the GOP must win the White House, Senate, and House in 2004 and maybe even hold Congress in 2006. Bush adviser Karl Rove agrees. He recently told a Republican group that the realignment question won't be decided until 2004.

Republican Gains

	1992	Today
House Seats	176	229
Total House Vote	46%	51%
State Legislatures	8	21
State Legislators	3,031	3,684
Governorships	18	27

There's really no reason to wait. Realignment is already here, and well advanced. In 1964, Barry Goldwater cracked the Democratic lock on the South. In 1968 and 1972, Republicans established a permanent advantage in presidential races. In the big bang of realignment, 1994, Republicans took the House and Senate and wiped out Democratic leads in governorships and state legislatures. Now, realignment has reached its entrenchment phase. Republicans are tightening their grip on Washington and erasing their weakness among women and Latinos. The gender gap now exposes Democratic weakness among men. Sure, an economic collapse or political shock could reverse these gains. But that's not likely.

Look at the recall. With two ballot questions, no party primaries, and a short campaign, it wasn't a normal election. But it displayed all the signs of realignment. Republicans were enthusiastic, Democrats downcast, Latinos in play, and the gender gap was stood on its head. The result: California is no longer a reliably Democratic state. Until the October 7 recall that replaced Democratic governor Gray Davis with Arnold Schwarzenegger, Republicans hadn't won a major statewide race since 1994. Bush spent millions there in 2000 but lost California by 11 points to Al Gore, who spent zilch in the state.

Yet in the recall, Republicans captured 62 percent of the vote. Bush's approval rating was slightly positive (49 to 48 percent), roughly the same as in other states. In the Fox News exit poll, 39 percent of voters identified themselves as Democrats, 37 percent as Republicans—a big GOP gain since last year when the Democratic lead was 7 or 8 points. A solid majority of women voted to recall Davis and elect a Republican. According to the *Los Angeles Times* exit poll, 41 percent of Latinos voted for a Republican governor—over a Latino Democrat, Cruz Bustamante. California is now competitive.

Democrats insist the recall merely showed anger against incumbents. In fact, it showed California was catching up with a powerful Republican trend over the past decade. In 1992, Democrats captured 51 percent of the total vote in House races to 46 percent for Republicans. By 2002, those numbers had flipped—Republicans 51 percent, Democrats

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Illustration by Thomas Fluharty

46 percent. And Republicans have held their House majority over five elections, including two in which Democratic presidential candidates won the popular vote. They won 230 House seats in 1994, 226 in 1996, 223 in 1998, 221 in 2000, and 229 in 2002. They also won Senate control in those elections.

These voting patterns fit Walter Dean Burnham's definition of realignment: "a sudden transformation that turns out to be permanent." Burnham is a University of Texas political scientist, just retired but still the chief theorist of realignment. He is neither a Republican nor a conservative.

The same Republican trend is true for state elections. In 1992, Democrats captured 59 percent of state legislative seats (4,344 to 3,031 for Republicans). Ten years later, Republicans won their first majority (3,684 to 3,626) of state legislators since 1952. In 1992, Democrats controlled the legislatures of 25 states to 8 for Republicans, while the others had split control. Today, Republicans rule 21 legislatures to 16 for Democrats. Governors? Republicans had 18 in 1992, Democrats 30. Today, Republicans hold 27 governorships, Democrats 23.

Not to belabor dry numbers, but Republicans have also surged in party identification. Go back to 1982, the year of the first midterm election of Ronald Reagan's presidency. The Harris Poll found Democrats had a 14-point edge (40 to 26 percent) as the party with which voters identified. By 1992, the Democratic edge was 6 points (36 to 30 percent) and last year, President Bush's midterm election, it was 3 points (34 to 31 percent).

But the Harris Poll tilts slightly Democratic. (In fact, I believe most polls underestimate Republican ID because of nominal Democrats who routinely vote Republican.) The 2000 national exit poll showed Republicans and Democrats tied at 34 percent. A Republican poll after the 2002 elections gave the party a 3- to 4-point edge. Based on his own poll in July, Democrat Mark Penn (who once polled for Bill Clinton) declared: "In terms of the percentage of voters who identify themselves as Democrats, the Democratic party is currently in its weakest position since the dawn of the New Deal." His survey pegged Democratic ID at 32 percent, Republican ID at 30 percent. A half-century ago, 49 percent of voters said they were Democrats. Today, wrote Penn, "among middle class voters, the Democratic party is a shadow of its former self."

All these figures represent "a general creeping mode of realignment, election by election," says Burnham. By gaining governors and state legislators, Republicans are now in the entrenchment phase. "If you control the relevant institutions, you can really do a number on the opposition," Burnham says. "You can marginalize them."

Last year, Republicans shattered the mold of midterm elections for a new president, picking up nine House seats. Most of these came from Florida, Michigan, and Pennsylvania, states where Republicans controlled the legislature and governor's office in 2001 and exploited the new census to draw House districts for Republican advantage. In 2002, Republicans completed their takeover of Texas by winning the state house of representatives. This allowed them to gerrymander the U.S. House districts earlier this month to target incumbent white Democrats. Unless the redistricting is overturned in court, Democrats may lose five to seven seats in 2004. "Texas means there's no battle for the House" until after the 2010 census, says Republican pollster Frank Luntz. Democrats may wind up with fewer than 200 seats for the first time since 1946, says Burnham.

Democrats have theorized that the voting patterns of Hispanics, women, and urban professionals were producing what analysts John Judis and Ruy Teixeira called an "emerging Democratic majority." But in 2002 and the recall, the theory faltered. The midterm elections saw the demise of the old gender gap—women voting more Democratic than men—that had endured for over two decades. The intervening event was the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. That "really did change things permanently," says Burnham. In 2002, women, partly out of concern for the security and safety of their families, voted like men. Florida exemplified the change. In 2000, President Bush lost the vote of female professionals in the burgeoning I-4 corridor across central Florida. In 2002, his brother, Republican governor Jeb Bush, won that vote.

The California recall offered another test of whether the gender gap had been reversed, especially since Schwarzenegger was accused of sexual harassment. In the Fox poll, 53 percent of women voted to recall Davis, 56 percent for a Republican for governor (43 percent for Schwarzenegger). White women were even more Republican—58 percent for recall, 63 percent for a Republican (49 percent for Schwarzenegger).

What about men? In the recall, they voted more Republican than women by 8 points, which highlights the gender gap problem for Democrats. The shift of men to the Republican party was the engine of realignment in the South and plains and Rocky Mountain states. Penn agrees: "The main decline has been due to a massive defection among white voters, particularly men," he wrote in analyzing his own July poll. "Today only 22 percent of white men identify as Democratic voters and only 32 percent of white women do the same. Blacks continue to remain stalwarts of the party, while Hispanics are now split between Democrats and Independents." The Latino vote is all the more important because it is growing as a percentage of the national electorate. The black vote isn't.

The good news for Republicans is that Latino independents are increasingly inclined to vote Republican. It may not have been a big deal in 1998, when George Bush won half the Latino vote in his reelection as Texas governor. It was, however, a big deal when Jeb Bush captured a majority of the non-Cuban Latino vote in Florida last year. George Bush, running for president, had lost this vote decisively in Florida in 2000.

In the recall, Republican inroads among Latinos were extraordinary. "One cardinal principle of Democratic party politics in California . . . has been that Latinos, like African-Americans, will remain loyal Democrats regardless of what the party does," Joel Kotkin, a senior fellow at Pepperdine University and respected California political analyst, wrote for the *New Republic* website. That principle crumbled in the recall. Democrats attacked Schwarzenegger for backing Proposition 187, which barred illegal immigrants from getting public services but was later overturned, and for opposing driver's licenses for illegals. Nonetheless, he got 31 percent of the Latino vote, the best showing for a Republican candidate in California in a decade. Blacks voted 18 percent for Schwarzenegger.

Democrats have two further problems, one with image, the other with culture. With Schwarzenegger and former New York City mayor Rudy Giuliani as the second and third most visible Republicans in the country, it's difficult for Democrats to pigeonhole Republicans as conservative extremists. Schwarzenegger "bridges the cultural gap" between moderate and conservative Republicans, says Republican representative Tom Davis of Virginia, an elections expert. Luntz, the Republican pollster, says the emergence of Schwarzenegger means "you can be cool and be a Republican." By the way, when Schwarzenegger appeared with Bush in California last week, he got a bigger ovation than the president.

Davis says the divide on cultural issues—abortion, gays, guns, etc.—is a diminishing problem for Republicans. Schwarzenegger's prominence makes it okay for voters who are moderate-to-liberal on cultural issues but conservative on taxes and spending to be Republican. These voters require "permission to stay Republican," Davis argues. And Schwarzenegger "gives them a comfort level. But Democrats don't have anyone to make cultural conservatives feel comfortable. It's the Democrats' worst nightmare."

Nothing is guaranteed in politics. The political future is never a straight-line projection of the present. And the ascendant party always hits bumps in the road. Democrats were dominant from 1932 to 1994, but they lost major elections in 1938, 1946, and 1952. Now, Republicans are stronger than at any time in at least a half-century and probably since the 1920s. Realignment has already happened, and there's no reason to pretend otherwise. ♦

Inside the Bush Greenhouse

There's a contradiction at the heart of the administration's global warming policy—but it's fixable.

By William F. Pedersen

Credit for environmental achievements always comes hard for Republicans. Sure enough, the Bush administration's global warming policy, though largely a model of prudent judgment and respect for science, is relentlessly denounced. And the attacks take their toll. The Bush team's alleged indifference to an issue of planetary importance has drained all credibility from its environmental policies at home and diminished American "soft power" abroad.

It doesn't have to be so. A review of the Bush policy shows not only that its principal elements are sound, but also that its chief weakness—the self-contradiction of a policy that admits the need for action, yet rejects even modest mandatory measures to control greenhouse emissions—could be readily reversed. By adopting a program of moderate greenhouse limits—for which there exists a cost-effective, road-tested model consistent with conservative principles—the administration could convert global warming policy from a drain on its political strength and credibility into an asset.

In all its major statements on global warming, the administration has agreed that human activities have increased atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases and will continue to increase them; that this may have caused some measurable change in global temperature; and that the prospect of further temperature increase is a legitimate national and international concern, justifying a response.

But the administration rightly rejects the Kyoto Protocol, the 1997 international agreement on greenhouse limits, as both ineffective and mismatched to the problem. Since Kyoto imposed no obligations on developing countries, which will emit over half of all greenhouse gases by about 2020, even perfect compliance by the covered countries would not significantly reduce global emissions. What's more, any costs resulting from global warming will probably increase slowly over many decades. Yet for the countries it covers, Kyoto sets absurdly short, tight, and costly reduction deadlines, which almost no one will meet.

The administration also rightly rejects calls for establishing a planetary carbon limit by some unspecified means, and then setting up a global market in carbon "emission rights." We do not know enough at present to establish a planetary limit. Even if we did, taking the next step and assigning country by country control responsibility would be politically impossible as long as the cost of carbon control remained high. Distributing emission rights in proportion to current carbon emissions would force poor countries to buy allowances from the rich as they developed. But favoring poor countries would require rich countries to buy allowances from the poor—or from the elites who govern them—simply to keep their economies running. And it might not even work. Many poor countries cannot control illegal logging or electricity theft. How could they be expected to control carbon emissions?

Instead, the administration champions a new approach to global carbon control, one that is workable and fair for rich and poor alike. It seeks reductions not in carbon emissions directly, but in the "carbon intensity" of an economy—the ratio of carbon emissions to gross national product. If the carbon intensity of a country's economy falls by 20 percent, that economy can grow by 20 percent without increasing its carbon emissions. When carbon intensity falls faster than the economy grows, carbon emissions decrease.

This approach rewards cleaner growth, not diminished growth. In a world two-thirds of whose people live in poverty, curbing growth is both immoral and politically unacceptable—witness the rejection of Kyoto obligations by developing countries.

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Since economies that use current technology have unavoidably high carbon intensity, only new, carbon-free technologies can reconcile economic growth with carbon control. Accordingly, the Bush administration seeks to spur the development of cars that run on hydrogen, ways to burn coal without carbon emissions, and new, safer nuclear power plants. Success in developing these technologies might eventually make global carbon regulation possible.

Finally, the administration supports a modest reduction beyond projected levels in the carbon intensity of the American economy over the next nine years. But here's the rub: It proposes to achieve these reductions by purely "voluntary" means. Multi-billion dollar government subsidies for the development of carbon-free technologies are part of the plan, along with government-induced commitments from specific industrial sectors to reduce carbon intensity. To promote that reduction, regulators at the Department of Energy are writing rules by which industries, down to the individual company level, will keep detailed accounts of their greenhouse gas emissions. And the regulators are setting up a government registry for greenhouse gas reductions, designed to assure the reducing companies that they "will not be disadvantaged under any future climate program." That is, if some future government program mandates limits on emissions, companies will get credit for reductions they have already made.

To defend this approach, the administration argues that mandatory controls would violate conservative principles, grow into an oppressive regulatory monster, cost too much, and damage the coal industry, an important Bush constituency. It also contends that the science is too inconclusive to justify more than voluntary measures and subsidies. These claims, weak to start with, will almost inevitably grow weaker over time.

The administration has ardently solicited participation in its carbon-intensity reduction program. But government-encouraged voluntary programs to achieve broad economic goals like reducing inflation have always failed. There is no reason to believe reducing carbon intensity will be different. And encouraging technical innovation by government subsidy has a comparably unimpressive record.

Far from respecting conservative principles, jawboning companies into "voluntary" reductions and then monitoring their progress reverses the conservative approach from Hayek on of creating one rule for all alike and letting individuals decide how to comply. It raises the prospect of extra-legal state pressure on the private world. Encouraging companies to register emission reductions by suggesting those reductions will have value in the future is even worse, since it encourages present action—in the absence of any legal requirement—with a vague promise of future government benefits.

The administration's call for voluntary emission reductions and its supporting regulations make sense only on the assumption that the government will impose mandatory controls fairly soon. Who would participate in a "voluntary" reduction program except to stave off a mandatory one? Similarly, company-by-company greenhouse emissions accounts are not needed for general debate on greenhouse policy. Why develop them except as a step toward mandatory controls? Finally, who would participate in a program to register reductions so as not to be "disadvantaged under a future regulatory program" unless they believed such a program was coming?

Since the prospect of a mandatory program powers the present "voluntary" emissions reduction programs, those programs will stop running if the prospect recedes. Indeed, either the success or the failure of the voluntary efforts will strengthen the demand for a mandatory program: To the extent the initiatives succeed, they will create both the accounting infrastructure such a program would need and a constituency for it in the form of the companies that have already made reductions. Failure will even more directly bolster demand for stronger measures.

Similarly, the administration's subsidy program makes sense only if the promised technologies will be both developed and put to use. To the extent the development effort fails, the pressures for a new approach will increase. Success will produce calls for new regulations making sure these technologies are actually employed.

And even before success and failure can be measured, the administration's commitment to a greenhouse program made up of many small government-sponsored steps like subsidy grants and voluntary reduction commitments presents an irresistible temptation to claim environmental credit for each new measure, even while denying the need for anything more. But if the problem is so real that limited steps are oversold, why are more effective measures rejected?

The question is especially compelling since the approach the administration rejects—a combination of mandatory limits and a free market in emissions rights—would harness the power of private

initiative to improve technology and efficiency. Its rules would automatically give every participant an equal incentive to pursue emission reductions without any need—or room—for special government intervention.

Here, the administration should take its inspiration from the Environmental Protection Agency's "acid rain" control program, which runs on market principles with notable success. It has reduced power plant sulfur emissions by two-thirds since it began operating, at a cost one-third of industry estimates and half of government estimates, while relying on a government administrative staff of twenty.

Traditional regulatory programs have often expanded beyond their original boundaries through the invisible "mission creep" of many small decisions. Market-based programs have not. They specify up front the costs they will impose; the legislature and all affected parties see what is being authorized. And since they operate through a small set of clearly defined rules, it is hard to expand their scope surreptitiously. The EPA has not materially changed the framework of the acid rain control program since Congress defined it in 1990, though the Bush administration is now asking Congress to expand it.

Any greenhouse program consistent with Bush administration goals would aim not at achieving the Kyoto targets, but at reducing the carbon intensity of the U.S. economy by encouraging long-term technical innovation. But the acid rain precedent suggests that even a limited program, by giving the imprimatur of political commitment to modest carbon-reduction efforts, and establishing an efficient framework to achieve them, could well produce greater reductions than we now expect. Accordingly, such a program could start with very limited burdens, subject to later congressional adjustments as developing science and its own success might dictate.

These new steps would be fully justified by science, even though the current consensus that unchecked greenhouse gas emissions will cause environmental damage could still be wrong, and even though science cannot now predict the timing, geographic distribution, or exact impacts of any future warming.

Without new measures, atmospheric carbon levels will inevitably continue to rise. According to the official study, under the "most likely" scenario, atmospheric carbon will double by 2100, to levels not seen in 20 million years. To stabilize atmospheric carbon at twice preindustrial levels would probably require a 60 percent decrease in developed-country carbon emissions and a much greater reduction in the carbon intensity of their economies.

Given the certainty of atmospheric carbon increases, the uncertainties in global warming science may counsel less action, but not necessarily no action, to moderate its dangers. The risk of a future heart attack may call for weight loss and exercise even when it does not call for surgery.

The administration, after all, has *already* found the greenhouse consensus adequate to call for developing new technology and reducing carbon intensity. The question whether it has selected the right means to achieve those ends does not involve science at all.

The administration's contention that greenhouse science is strong enough to support the current Bush policy, but not strong enough to justify any further efforts, has almost required it to talk out of both sides of its mouth, stressing the legitimacy of global warming concerns to some audiences, and the flimsiness of the evidence to others. This has invited critics to assume that the administration's entire global warming program is only lip service.

The current Bush policy is unsustainable. Both its own internal logic and the course of events will make it steadily harder and more politically costly to defend.

If the existing scientific consensus solidifies and carbon levels continue to rise, the only available responses short of policy change will be to stress the remaining uncertainties even as they get less significant, or to remain silent. But denial and silence won't work forever. Only the most unlikely of all developments—scientific proof that global warming concerns have been so exaggerated that even the coming carbon increases can be accommodated without danger—could stop this downward spiral.

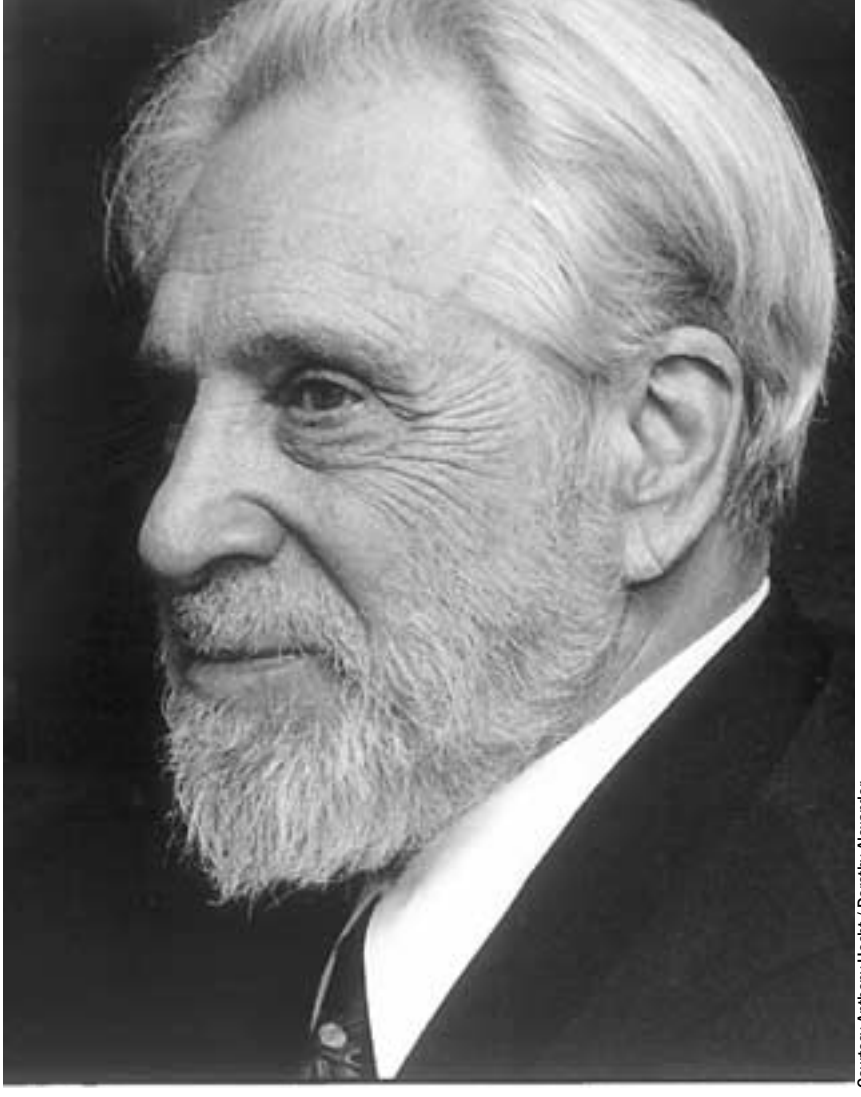
Plainly, then, the current Bush policy is unsustainable. Both its own internal logic and the course of events will make it steadily harder and more politically costly to defend. Yet a course correction now can head off this trouble.

By simply endorsing the eventual need for a modest mandatory greenhouse control program and beginning to develop it, the administration, at a stroke, with no sacrifice of principle and at modest economic cost, could burnish its credibility on the environment. True, Bush's noisiest critics wouldn't be swayed. But fair-minded people both here and abroad would be forced to sit up and take notice. ♦

Anthony Hecht at Eighty

A life in poetry

By David Mason



Courtesy Anthony Hecht / Dorothy Alexander

The eye, self-satisfied, will be misled, says the monologuist in Anthony Hecht's "The Transparent Man," *Thinking the puzzle solved, supposing at last / It can look forth and comprehend the world*. High ambition and high achievement have faded in American poetry, but they will not disappear while Hecht lives. Eighty this year, he has just published *Collected Later Poems*, the complete texts of his three most recent volumes of verse, and *Melodies Unheard*, a gathering of essays.

Most readers remember him primarily as the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of a few dark but frequently anthologized poems such as "More Light! More Light!" or "A Hill":

In Italy, where this sort of thing can occur,
I had a vision once . . .
It got darker; pushcarts and people dissolved
And even the great Farnese Palace itself
Was gone, for all its marble; in its place
Was a hill, mole-colored and bare.

Or perhaps such lighter fare as "The Dover Bitch," which imagines what the woman in Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach" was thinking while Arnold bemoaned to her the loss of faith and the decay of things:

So there stood Matthew Arnold and this girl
With the cliffs of England crumbling away behind them,
And he said to her, "Try to be true to me,
And I'll do the same for you, for things are bad
All over, etc., etc."
Well now, I knew this girl. It's true she had read
Sophocles in a fairly good translation
And caught that bitter allusion to the sea,
But all the time he was talking she had in mind
The notion of what his whiskers would feel like
On the back of her neck.

But Hecht is more than our resident misanthrope. He is one of the great synthesizers of the modern moment, a visionary poet capable of conveying private experience in public forms. He is formidable, to be sure, allusive and self-consciously literary in style, but he remains utterly above the triviality of much contemporary poetry, and he mixes opulence with an uncompromising and complex moral vision. At a time when poets are happy to clown for any crowd that will so much as notice them, Hecht remains defiantly difficult, offering pleasures of the sort one might derive from the novels of Henry James, the essays of John Ruskin, the paintings of Tiepolo.

Born in 1923, Anthony Hecht grew up in New York, the son of a businessman whose fortunes rose and fell so precipitously that family life was constantly imploding. Hints of these early years can be found in poems like "Green: An Epistle" and "Apprehensions." In an interview with Philip Hoy he observed his family's mixture of pride and shame at their Jewish heritage, his brother Roger's epilepsy and other ailments, and a general state of unhappiness throughout childhood.

He had a good schooling, however, attending Bard College before being drafted at twenty (his bachelor's degree was awarded *in absentia*). Overseas with the 97th Infantry, Hecht saw combat in

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Hecht as a child

Courtesy Anthony Hecht

France, Germany, and Czechoslovakia, participating in the liberation of a concentration camp at Flossenburg, where Dietrich Bonhoeffer had been murdered just days earlier: "The place, the suffering, the prisoners' accounts were beyond comprehension. For years after I would wake shrieking." Always inclined to seek aesthetic compensations for the pains of reality, he would find in this experience and in decades of later reflection the blunt truth underlying all of his poems: Life is so cruel, our sanity so tenuous, that any help offered by art and love is to be cherished beyond measure.

His oldest friends remember him for his rollicking sense of humor, as the fellow who used to recite swatches of Milton's "Lycidas" in a W.C. Fields accent, and the humor appears in such work as "The Ghost in the Martini," a politically incorrect lyric about the male libido at work, which heightens the comedy by having the man's conscience speak from his drink as he is trying to seduce a younger woman.

But there's no denying his melancholy, or his confrontation with brutal reality even while he often expresses a Yeatsian desire for escape from that reality. Among the events that set him on his melancholic course was the failure of his first marriage. In 1959, Hecht's wife left with their two young sons, and he fell into a depression requiring hospitalization and a course of Thorazine. Many of Hecht's friends, including Robert Lowell and Anne Sexton, had intimate experience of madness. Yet Hecht retained a survivor's instinct these poets lacked. Although he would never have predicted this for himself, his life has been a movement toward health and a greater equilibrium than the mad mid-century poets enjoyed. Hecht's immense sadness at the divorce can be felt in poems like "A Letter" and "Adam":

Adam, there will be
Many hard hours,
As an old poem says,
Hours of loneliness.
I cannot ease them for you;
They are our common lot.

But Hecht never swoons with self-pity as the confessional poets were wont to do. The story of his life as a man and poet is of the consistent dignity and mastery of his work, the happiness of his second marriage, the honors heaped on his head, the gradual waning of temperamental mood-swings, and the solidifying of poetic command. This has happened, of course, in a literary climate that generally lacks the patience to understand a writer of complexity. With all his successes, Hecht has not yet been read as the major figure he is.

Collected Later Poems
by Anthony Hecht
Knopf, 224 pp., $25

Melodies Unheard
Essays on the Mysteries of Poetry
by Anthony Hecht
Johns Hopkins University Press, 314 pp., $24.95

He had a stable academic career, teaching for many years at the University of Rochester and finishing at Georgetown. Along the way, Hecht has published seven volumes of verse, beginning with *A Summoning of Stones* in 1954, a sometimes ornamental book that was respectfully reviewed and went quickly out of print. More than a dozen difficult and formative years passed before he published *The Hard Hours* (1967), which generally displayed a tougher style and brought Hecht the Pulitzer. This was followed a decade later by *Millions of Strange Shadows*, another flawless collection, then with relative speed *The Venetian Vespers* (1979). Those three volumes—gathered in the 1990 *Collected Earlier Poems*—are enough to assure his place in American literature.

But Hecht went on to publish *The Transparent Man* (1990), *Flight Among the Tombs* (1996), and *The Darkness and the Light* (2001). Clearly, something more than bile and misanthropy has kept him alive. Compensatory and self-protective, Hecht's erudition, including his deep familiarity with the Bible, is part of the fabric of his poetry. Among literary influences one can easily identify Horace, Shakespeare, Milton, Baudelaire, Eliot, Auden, and John Crowe Ransom, his postwar teacher when he was on the G.I. Bill at Kenyon College. The resulting style can be elevated, to put it mildly, but as Hecht has noted, "any flamboyance is likely to be confronted or opposed by counterforce, directness, elemental grit."

The most obvious manifestation of this doubleness is in Hecht's technique of juxtaposition. His much-anthologized Holocaust poem, "More Light! More Light!" begins with a scene of a long-ago execution—three gruesome stanzas about a man being burnt at the stake. Then the poet makes a simple transition to World War II:

We move now to outside a German wood.
Three men are there commanded to dig a hole
In which the two Jews are ordered to lie down
And be buried alive by the third, who is a Pole.

Other poets have given us feasts of gratuitous horror from conflicts of one sort or another, but Hecht's tonal control lifts these lines to monumental power. In his early volumes a number of lyrics and meditative sequences arise from experience of war and the Holocaust: *The contemplation of horror is not edifying*, Hecht avows in "Rites and Ceremonies." *Neither does it strengthen the soul*. It is, however, not to be wished away. *Collected Later Poems* contains

fewer such poems, but at least one, "The Book of Yolek," rises to a level of greatness through this technique of juxtaposition.

Great sestinas are rare; the form works by repeating the same six line-endings in an elaborate pattern for six stanzas and a three-line coda. Hecht had already published a fine comedy in his "Sestina d'Inverno," but "The Book of Yolek" begins with a meal *Of grilled brook trout* and an after-dinner walk, at which point

You remember, peacefully, an earlier day
In childhood, remember a quite specific meal:
A corn roast and bonfire in summer camp.
That summer you got lost on a Nature Walk;
More than you dared admit, you thought of home;
No one else knows where the mind wanders to.

As the poem progresses, the end word "to" is varied as "1942" and then "tattoo" when another sort of camp is recalled, another manner of being lost, and another child: *Yolek who had bad lungs, who wasn't a day / Over five years old, commanded to leave his meal / And shamble between armed guards to his long home*. The poem concludes:

We're approaching August again. It will drive home
The regulation torments of that camp
Yolek was sent to, his small, unfinished meal,
The electric fences, the numeral tattoo,
The quite extraordinary heat of the day
They all were forced to take that terrible walk.

Whether on that silent, solitary walk
Or among crowds, far off or safe at home,
You will remember, helplessly, that day,
And the smell of smoke, and the loudspeakers of the camp.
Wherever you are, Yolek will be there, too.
His unuttered name will interrupt your meal.

Prepare to receive him in your home some day.
Though they killed him in the camp they sent him to,
He will walk in as you're sitting down to a meal.

The juxtaposition of civility and horror is particularly Hechtian. The same sort of juxtaposition is on display in "A Hill," or in the humor and madness of "Third Avenue in Sunlight," or the mystery and manners of his poem about youthful sex, "The End of the Weekend." The title of *Millions of Strange Shadows* derives from Shakespeare's sonnet: *What is your substance, whereof are you made, / That millions of strange shadows on you tend?* And yet, despite the skepticism about appearance and reality throughout his work, the book is dedicated to Hecht's second wife, Helen, a presence in his happiest poems.

Hecht also has a talent for dramatic monologue. In "Peripeteia" (Aristotle's term for the turn of a tragic plot), Hecht's speaker begins in a theater with *the familiar rustling of programs, / My hair mussed from behind by a grand gesture / Of mink*. "Peripeteia" warns us about illusions while assenting to what might be illusory, too: the love of that dream girl stepping off the stage. The poem is both an elaborate valentine to his wife and a wink and a nod to the rest of us.

Meanwhile, the title poem of *The Venetian Vespers* has an unnamed protagonist who shares some of Hecht's war experience as well as his painterly use of words. This highly unstable speaker, uncertain even of his own origins, ends up clinging to the visible world—*The soul being drenched in fine particulars*—as if for salvation.

The critic Gregory Dowling has shown in a brilliant essay how Hecht's elevated diction undercuts its own authority: "The poem is not only the monologue of a deeply troubled and self-questioning man, it is also an exploration of the triumphs and limits of language—and, in particular, of 'the high style.' And it is no accident that the poet has chosen a city that is both a triumph of self-glorifying splendor and an emblem of worldly decay for this exploration."

When Hecht chooses protagonists further removed from himself, he disturbs a kind of naturalistic decorum in which we are accustomed to fewer stylistic flourishes. Reading such poems as "The Grapes" and "The Short End," I find myself torn between distaste for the condescension in Hecht's handling of lower-class subjects and pleasure in the brilliant writing.

Hecht's facility with multiple poetic modes—lyrics, meditations, narratives, satires, and dramatic poems—continues in *Collected Later Poems*. In *The Transparent Man* two extended monologues, the title poem and "See Naples and Die," anchor the book with their fictional detail. If neither poem is quite so ambitious or moving as *The Venetian Vespers*, each reconfirms Hecht's psychological range. "A Love for Four Voices," in which the young lovers from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* make delightful speeches, now seems to me a successful Mozartian romp. Here Hecht indulges his affection for the Baroque, including such words as "cabochons" and "ipseity." If there is any moral to this masque, perhaps it lies in a couplet spoken by Helena, observing that *If life is brief, . . . sex is even briefer, / Its joys like the illusions of a reefer*.

Courtesy Anthony Hecht

Hecht in the 97th Infantry

Hecht's vision has always had its moral aspect. The very authority and immodesty of his style is, in effect, a manifestation of his mistrust of conventional cant, part of his devotion to imaginative freedom even while accepting the restraints of rhetoric and poetic form. There's something anarchic in Hecht's vision that oddly verges on the surreal, but it's all so stylized and seemingly genteel that it sneaks up on you. He is a mannerist with good manners.

Courtesy Anthony Hecht / Rollie McKenna

"The Presumptions of Death" is a sequence treating Hecht's darker obsessions with brutal whimsy or arch civility, each poem accompanied by a woodcut from Leonard Baskin. Another poem, "The Mysteries of Caesar," portrays the closeted homosexuality of a Latin teacher. Still another high point in this volume is "Proust on Skates," imagining the utterly refined and isolated novelist enjoying ordinary sport. In "Sarabande on Attaining the Age of Seventy-Seven," the poet's birthday gift to himself, Hecht speaks for anyone who has survived to old age:

A turn, a glide, a quarter-turn and bow,
The stately dance advances; these are airs
Bone-deep and numbing, as I should know by now,
Diminishing the cast like musical chairs.

Not every poet of Hecht's generation has taken seriously the responsibility to evaluate the work of others, living and dead. His previous books of criticism include *Obbligati*, *The Hidden Law* (about W.H. Auden), and *On the Laws of Poetic Art* (a series of Mellon lectures). Those books display thorough erudition, a willingness at times to belabor a point, and a gentrified style that has not been to the taste of his detractors.

Melodies Unheard, his new collection of essays, surveys writers from Shakespeare to Charles Simic, the latter an unexpected but fortuitous taste of Hecht's, showing us his ability to locate what Marianne Moore called "the genuine" in a variety of poets. His introduction has useful things to say about the practice of poetry, but also establishes his principles of criticism. He values formal command, but he does not assume it exists in a vacuum. His broad reading and years of classroom lecturing cause him to place literature in the context of all the learning and experience he can muster—which turns out to be quite a lot. He even chastises two former masters of his, William Empson and W.H. Auden, for lapses in their criticism. About a passage in Auden's lectures on Shakespeare, Hecht concludes, "This is ingenious, artful, and not altogether to be trusted." Throughout the book one finds Hecht appreciating "fine particulars" in poetry, dispraising poems with professional expertise, taking care to make his own taste part of his discussions.

What Hecht once wrote for his dead friend Joseph Brodsky might well be said about Hecht himself:

Reader, dwell with his poems. Underneath
Their gaiety and music, note the chilled strain
Of irony, of felt and mastered pain,
The sound of someone laughing through clenched teeth.

Hecht's grand style—partly built upon revulsion at the worst humanity has to offer, partly upon the true poet's love of words and word-shapes—exists at a time when ornament of any sort is greeted with scorn or indifference. No other poet of Hecht's generation has given us such a range of characters, forms, elaborate and brutal forcefulness, yoking Europe and America in their joint experiences of art, war, and the "wilderness of comfort" that is often ordinary life. No other poet in English has fashioned such disillusioned beauty. ♦

Courtesy Anthony Hecht / Jill Krementz

W.H. Auden and Anthony Hecht

The Wilerson townhouse in New York, 1970. All pictures: Knopf.

A Family Affair

Kathy Boudin and the generations of the radical life.

BY HARVEY KLEHR

Kathy Boudin was paroled from a New York prison this September after serving twenty-two years for her role in a robbery of a Brinks armored car in Nyack, New York, during which a guard and two policemen were murdered. Boudin and David Gilbert, father of her child, were driving one of the getaway vehicles, filled with gun-toting members of a black revolutionary group who had just killed the guard. Stopped by a police roadblock, Kathy urged the cops to holster their guns moments before her comrades jumped from the truck and shot them and she tried to run away. She avoided the life sentence Gilbert received by a plea bargain negotiated by her father, a famed civil-liberties lawyer named Leonard Boudin.

More than fifteen years ago, in *The Big Dance*, a reporter for a local paper, John Castellucci, wrote an excellent account of the crime and its roots in the strange alliance of white radicals and "the Family," a gang of thugs and self-identified black revolutionaries. Now, Susan Braudy, once Kathy Boudin's classmate at Bryn Mawr, explores the glamorous but dysfunctional Boudin family to account for how a child of privilege from a family committed to both the law and left-wing causes turned into an accessory to murder.

Family Circle
The Boudins and the Aristocracy of the Left
by Susan Braudy
Knopf, 460 pp., $27.95

Family Circle: The Boudins and the Aristocracy of the Left is a fascinating—if somewhat flawed—account of a family that has been at the center of American radical politics for many years. More a pastiche of illuminating episodes from Leonard and Kathy's lives than a detailed history, it offers a plausible and damning portrait of a group of people convinced that the America in which they were thriving was a racist, repressive, and imperialist society, and that those opposed to it, whether Soviet spies, Latin American dictators, or street thugs, deserved encouragement, support, and emulation.

Kathy Boudin's family was part of a left-wing aristocracy in America. Her great-uncle, Louis Boudin, a Russian immigrant who became a successful labor lawyer, wrote an important book that helped introduce Americans to Marxism, but he never became politically active. He was denied a seat at the first convention of the Industrial Workers of the World on the grounds that as a lawyer he was "a parasite on the working class," and a theoretical dispute led him to walk out of the first Communist party convention in 1919, never to return. Leonard Boudin idolized his uncle Louis and worked in his labor law firm for a number of years after graduating from St. John's Law School. In the early 1940s he joined Victor Rabinowitz in a law firm whose client list over the years included radicals of every stripe: Communist-dominated unions, accused Soviet spy Judith Coplon, Rockwell Kent, Paul Robeson, the Castro government, Dr. Benjamin Spock, and Daniel Ellsberg.

Kathy's mother, Jean Roisman, also grew up in a radical milieu. The daughter of a pickle-maker, she became friends as a young girl with Madeleine Leof, whose father's home was a center of radicalism in Philadelphia. Dr. Morris Leof presided over a left-wing salon where Communists, socialists, and left-wing artists mixed and mingled. One daughter, Charlotte, married physicist Robert Serber. Both members of the Communist party, they worked at Los Alamos during World War II. Jean befriended Clifford Odets and Marc Blitzstein at the Leofs. Her sister married I.F. Stone, later a radical idol.

After their marriage in 1937 the Boudins dabbled with left-wing causes but remained organizationally independent. Their sympathies, however, were clear. Jean had briefly joined a Communist student group at the University of Pennsylvania. Marc Blitzstein, a secret party member, consulted Leonard about labor law while writing *Cradle Will Rock*. The Boudins helped their neighbor, Margaret Mead, found the Downtown Community School, a progressive experiment in education. When he withdrew his son from the school, Dwight MacDonald accused Leonard of being among a small cadre

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Victor Rabinowitz (left) and Leonard Boudin (right) flank their client, Dr. Benjamin Spock.

of "Stalinoids" who ran it. But Leonard remained aloof from the ideological wars of the American left, convinced that he could make his contribution to the transformation of America by representing left-wing clients in court. Although he frequently defended people who refused to answer questions about their Communist affiliations, Leonard twice swore out non-Communist affidavits.

Leonard had experimented with homosexuality in college (one of his lovers was the writer and social critic Paul Goodman), and after he married, he embarked on a neverending string of heterosexual affairs, while Jean was also unfaithful. Leonard had a desperate need for adoration from women and pursued them obsessively. One affair in 1952 had him thinking of divorce; as a result Jean suffered a mental breakdown and attempted suicide twice. For the rest of her life, she continued to be affected by the electroshock treatments she underwent. Jean treated Leonard as a demigod, displaying a "fawning desire to please" him. Among Leonard's conquests detailed by Braudy were his client Judy Coplon, the psychologist he hired to care for his children while Jean was hospitalized, some of Kathy's classmates, and even one of her pregnant friends.

Born in 1943, four years after her brother Michael, Kathy spent her life, according to Braudy, alternating between seeking her father's approval and demonstrating that she had the courage to act while he merely took as clients people braver than he was. Her brother's accomplishments made her task even harder. Michael was an academic star whose legal successes—top graduate at Harvard Law School, clerk for Supreme Court Justice Harlan, partner at Covington and Burling and, in 1992, a Bush appointment as federal appeals court judge—stoked Leonard's pride, even if their views were at opposite poles. To Kathy, her brother's conservative politics were as execrable as his profession: "f—ing boring life, f—ing bad values."

If Michael promised to surpass his father as a lawyer, Kathy was determined to outdo him as an activist. She began in high school, where one of her classmates was Angela Davis, by participating in civil-rights demonstrations. Kathy never fit in at Bryn Mawr, where she sternly instructed other students as to their political and moral obligations. She led a campaign to organize the black campus maids; it was so disruptive that the administration decided to abolish their jobs. It was not the last time her ideological rigidity led her to hurt people she wanted to help.

Concerned that Kathy's political illusions went too far, Leonard arranged for her to spend her senior year at the University of Leningrad, believing it would temper her radicalism. But it seemed to have no discernible effect, perhaps because his own activities on behalf of Communist regimes minimized their crimes. On a trip to Cuba with her father, Kathy attacked him as all talk and no action and joined the Venceremos Brigade, harvesting sugar and being indoctrinated in revolution. After graduation her proposal to write a biography of Dostoyevsky was rejected by family friend Angus Cameron, a left-wing publisher, and she was unable to get a job as a junior editor at Random House. Adrift and unemployed, she went to work for Students for a Democratic Society in Cleveland in 1965.

As Kathy kept raising the ante in her confrontations with authority, Leonard continued to assist her. Jailed at the Chicago Democratic convention in 1968 for setting off stink bombs in hotels and telephoning bomb threats, she got off thanks to his legal skills. But even the organized mayhem of SDS became too tame. She joined its Weathermen faction, helping to organize and participate in the 1969 Days of Rage campaign in Chicago, during which a few hundred committed revolutionaries engaged in vandalism, fought pitched battles with the police, and set off small bombs. Kathy also trumped Leonard's sexual escapades; the Weathermen engaged in group sex to break down any vestiges of monogamy or bourgeois selfishness.

In March 1970 Kathy was living in a Greenwich Village townhouse with several comrades who were building an antipersonnel bomb that they intended to set off at a dance in Fort Dix. The incompetent bomb-makers crossed some wires and blew the house apart. Three Weathermen were killed, including Diana Oughton, whom Kathy had radicalized at Bryn Mawr. Kathy and another Weatherman staggered naked from the house, and went into hiding, beginning an underground odyssey that ended eleven years later in Nyack. Although Leonard urged her to surrender, Kathy and her comrades managed to survive on the margins of American society, supported by such celebrity sympathizers as Jon Voight, Marge Piercy, and William Kunstler. Izzy Stone praised the Weathermen as "wonderful kids" and "the most sensitive of a generation," without informing his readers that one of the fugitives was his niece. And, despite his role as an officer

of the court, Leonard continued to meet with Kathy clandestinely, and he seemed to relish her status as a heroine of the revolutionary underground.

While underground, Kathy participated in at least half of the Weathermen's two dozen or so bombings; she planted one device in a women's bathroom at the United States Capitol and probably helped set off a bomb at the Pentagon. After a split among the Weathermen, Kathy drifted into a small sect called the May 19th Communist Group that formed an alliance with a remnant of the Black Liberation Army. She helped obtain cars for bank robberies and the jailbreak of convicted cop-killer Joanne Chesimard, also known as Assata Shakur.

By 1980, however, she had a baby, fathered by fellow revolutionary David Gilbert, named Chesa Jackson, after Chesimard and another murderer and self-proclaimed revolutionary, George Jackson. Leonard, delighted by a grandson, pressed her to surrender. Instead, she dropped her year-old son at day care and went to Nyack to rob a bank with a group of street thugs who had already killed people in other robberies.

Neither Kathy Boudin nor her defenders have ever come to terms with her behavior in Nyack. Leonard tried to argue that because she had surrendered before the two policemen were murdered, she was legally not responsible for their deaths. He pushed David Gilbert, whom she married in prison, to commit perjury to exculpate Kathy; only after Gilbert balked at cooperating—even by lying—with the judicial system, did Leonard negotiate the plea bargain which sent Kathy to prison for twenty years, pleading her guilty to one count of murder. At her sentencing hearing, he told the court that her "contribution to political action" had been influential and denied she was a terrorist.

As Braudy shows, however, Kathy Boudin bore direct responsibility for the killings of both policemen. At her first, failed parole hearing in 2001, she lied about trying to escape from the scene of the crime and denied taking part in Weathermen bombings or knowing that a bomb was being built in the townhouse that exploded. She claimed: "I was never involved in violence directly." Even when she expressed remorse for the murders, she continued to insist that she was some kind of idealist working to reform the political system or comparable to people who helped escaped slaves make their way to freedom via the Underground Railroad.

Kathy Boudin's wanted poster, May 1, 1970.

For all its virtues and refusal to accept the self-interested rationalizations of the Boudin family for criminal behavior and murder, *Family Circle* suffers from several defects. Although many of the anecdotes about the Boudins are revealing, the book sometimes feels like a series of vignettes. Nor is it carefully documented; the sources for many of the stories are not clear. Braudy also makes a number of errors: The Venona project did not originate because of the capture of a Finnish code book, nor did FBI agent Robert Lamphere give cryptanalyst Meredith Gardner one-time pads that he then used to crack the code. Gardner and the other cryptanalysts did not work for J. Edgar Hoover. The Reverend William Melish did not have a major position in the CPUSA but was active in a front group. And Kathy could not have adopted Steve Nelson, "who'd jumped bail in the early 1950s" as a role model because Nelson did no such thing, although he did cooperate with Soviet intelligence.

Although she admits that some Communists were spies, Braudy seems to exculpate many of them. Judith Coplon was far more than a "lowly clerk in the Justice Department" who clipped newspaper articles. Leonard Boudin never demonstrated that "Hoover's FBI had framed Coplon"—because she was, in fact, guilty. Nor did Hoover frame the Rosenbergs.

For someone with no illusions about the criminality of the Weathermen and the fatuousness of their supporters, Braudy still has some odd fixations about the Communist party and its supporters. "What red-haters did not understand was that American communist sympathizers were mostly theorizers—not doers—and most had left the party because they balked at being told what to think."

Apart from the fact that sympathizers could not have left a party they never joined, Braudy's own book demonstrates just how many illusions the pro-Communist left continues to hold onto. In his autobiography, *An Unrepentant Leftist*, Leonard's long-time partner Victor Rabinowitz complained that while her means were "tragically wrong," Kathy Boudin's cause was entirely just: A corrupt, racist American state deserved to be attacked and destroyed.

Despite the angry protests of police and the children of the men she helped murder, Kathy Boudin is now free. Her son Chesa, raised by fellow terrorists Bill Ayres and Bernardine Dohrn, graduated from Yale last year and won a Rhodes scholarship. One can only hope that he will reject the legacy that his parents, foster parents, and those he is named for have bequeathed him. ♦

The Calculus of History

Neal Stephenson's science fiction of the past.

BY S.T. KARNICK

The quickest road to bestsellerdom for a novelist today is to raise Very Big Questions—and then not answer them. The trick is to dance around important moral and philosophical issues so as to seem profound, while refusing to come down firmly on any side, to ensure that one offends as few readers as possible.

Quicksilver
Volume 1
of the Baroque Cycle
by Neal Stephenson
William Morrow, 944 pp., $27.95

Neal Stephenson has been a master of this type of writing since his sci-fi book *Snow Crash* arrived with fanfare in 1992. Each of his first few novels combined a huge variety of disparate story elements, typically centered on cyberpunk speculation about what it would be like to live at a time when technological advances increasingly divorce human beings from the limitations of the natural world.

The relevance to our present situation is obvious, but what Stephenson adds to this mix is a decidedly old-fashioned respect for the idea of human nature, a core of characteristics that divide people from the rest of creation. In short, Stephenson's books suggest a belief in the soul, with all of its mysteries and perplexities. In Stephenson's case, the reluctance to answer the Very Big Questions may not be the matter of cowardice or guile that it is for far too many of his contemporaries. It may be instead an acknowledgment that in the novel, as in life, we see truth through experience, not through abstract reasoning or the acceptance of others' assertions.

This is a central theme of Stephenson's current novel, *Quicksilver*, his most ambitious book—which is saying a lot. Unlike his previous work, *Quicksilver* is entirely a historical novel, set in the Baroque era of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Though more than nine-hundred-pages long, it is only the first installment of a trilogy, called *The Baroque Cycle*, the subsequent volumes of which will be released in six months and a year.

The present volume has three main characters, two of whom we know to be ancestors of characters in Stephenson's previous book, *Cryptonomicon.* The protagonist is Daniel Waterhouse, a college roommate of Isaac Newton and son of a successful Puritan tradesman and political agitator, who is a talented scientist but no match for giants such as Newton, Robert Hooke, and Gottfried Leibniz. Daniel becomes the secretary of the Royal Society, the English organization devoted to the advancement of science (by which most of its members mean alchemy).

After more than three-hundred pages, the story shifts abruptly to follow the adventures of "Half-Cocked Jack" Shaftoe, King of the Vagabonds, a former London street urchin at loose ends in continental Europe. In the course of his bizarre adventures, Jack meets Eliza, a blonde harem girl from the imaginary island of Qwghlm, who is on a quest to wreak revenge on the man who kidnapped her and her mother years before and caused them to be sold into slavery. Later, Eliza meets Daniel, and the characters' stories intertwine thoroughly.

Vividly drawn characters based on real people abound, notably Samuel Pepys, Robert Hooke, Charles II, Louis XIV, William of Orange, Newton, and Leibniz. Stephenson has described his book quite accurately as a "historical, swashbuckler, potboiler epic." We witness a sea battle on a ship beset by numerous pirate craft in Cape Cod Bay, the depredations of the bubonic plague in England, the Great Fire of London, street riots, public hangings, the breaking of the Siege of Vienna, the Glorious Revolution, a gathering of witches on a German *Walpurgisnacht*, court intrigue in Versailles, numerous sword and gun battles, and much more.

As may be surmised, *Quicksilver* is something of a grab bag. Stephenson breaks things up with ample slapstick humor, discussions of philosophy and natural science, bawdy farce, letters, playlets dramatizing significant ideas and events, disquisitions on cryptography and economics, detailed descriptions of bodily functions, lots of sodomy, delusions of a syphilis sufferer, poems, quotations, lists, extensive biographical material on characters both fictional and historical, and much else. In fact, although the story is quite complex, the book's length is really more a product of all the details, explanations, and digressions the author provides to impress upon the reader the mental and physical realities of the time.

Not all of this works or is even necessary, but overall it is the right way to portray an era in which impressive scientific and artistic advances were being made in a world of widespread poverty, misery, and slavery. Stephenson considers nearly every important trend and controversy of the time. (The one important gap is that he pays relatively little attention to the arts.) Prominent among the issues considered are the religious controversies between Catholics and Protestants, and in particular the wars between factions within both church and state.

Of equal importance is money. As trade within and among nations increased during this era, the nature of money began to change fundamentally, from a strictly physical commodity to more of a medium of communication, and Stephenson depicts this transition and its implications with great accuracy and insight. This material, fascinating in itself, is part of a much larger and quite sophisticated treatment of economic principles, especially seen in the

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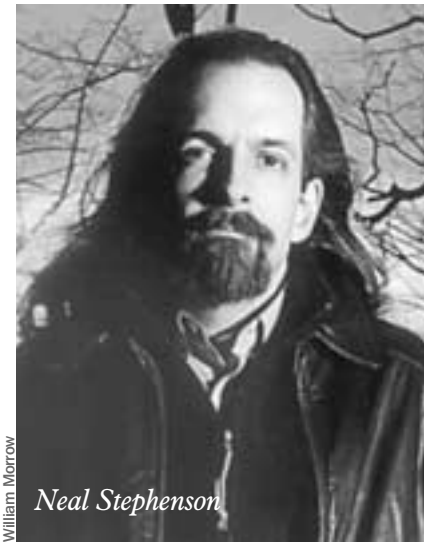
playing out of incentives for investment and productive work. The contrast between Holland, which has free markets, and France, which is under the repressive, high-tax regime of Louis XIV (to finance international adventures against England and domestic wars against the Huguenots) displays this theme quite distinctly. In France, even many of the nobility are dirt-poor, whereas in Holland, the peasants work incessantly and can afford to fill their stables not with horses but with painters creating works for sale in Amsterdam.

In short, the Baroque Era drew the blueprint for Modernity. As Stephenson noted in an interview publicizing this novel, the work of the Royal Society and other natural philosophers of the time coincided with similar currents in politics and religion. Historians have commonly characterized the Enlightenment as the time when human knowledge and power over nature really began to increase, but it was actually in the Baroque era that the most important progress in these regards was made. (Secularists prefer the Enlightenment because of the increasingly explicit questioning and ultimate rejection of revealed religion on the part of some of its prominent figures.) Stephenson does not agree with this fondness for the more skeptical era: "The Enlightenment, though it sounds really good, is and should be a controversial event" because of the damages it did.

He is correct in that assessment, and in *Quicksilver* he shows that it may well be best to see the Enlightenment, and indeed modernity itself, as an unfortunate detour in history, rather than a peak period of intellectual achievement. The main story is set in motion when Enoch Root—the mysterious, preternaturally long-lived alchemist from *Cryptonomicon*—arrives in Boston in 1713 to send lapsed Puritan scientist Daniel Waterhouse back to his home country of England to effect a reconciliation between two increasingly fractious scientific factions. The followers of Leibniz in Germany and those of Newton in England are neglecting their productive work in favor of serving as "cat's-paws and hired leg-breakers," as Root puts it, in arguments over which of the two men was the first to invent mathematical calculus.

The real conflict behind this argument, however, is between those who support the continued pursuit of alchemy—Newton's followers—and those devoted to the new science of empiricism (Leibniz's faction, which also includes the brilliant jack-of-all-scientific-trades Robert Hooke). Newton is content simply to describe natural phenomena, to give only "a mathematical notion of these forces, without considering their physical causes and seats." That is because he and his fellow alchemists follow Aristotle in believing that each thing in the natural world has an essential spirit behind it, the workings of which can never be fully explained. Leibniz, by contrast, thinks that science can fully explain *how* things work: "In order to be a Natural Philosopher I would have to put aside the old doctrine of substantial forms and instead rely upon Mechanism to explain the world."


William Morrow

Neal Stephenson

It is an interesting paradox that Leibniz's ideas, though they seem more congenial to mechanistic explanations of nature—and hence possibly dangerous to received religion—are in fact rather more conducive to an informed belief in an omnicompetent God. As Leibniz notes in a letter to Daniel, although Newton's science "encloses all the geometrickal truths [such as that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line], it excludes the other kind: truths that have their sources in fitness and in final causes." That is, any phenomenon that cannot be explained by simple geometry must be a truth *arbitrarily* made by God, not one essential to the nature of the universe, and explanation of these matters belongs to theology, "a realm [Newton] thinks is best approached through the study of alchemy."

Newton understands and accepts this limitation, admitting to Daniel that "Geometry can never explain gravity." Daniel asks, "To whom should we appeal then? Metaphysicians? Theologians? Sorcerers?" Newton replies, "They are all the same to me, and I am one." Leibniz finds this offensive because "it seems to cast God in the role of a capricious despot who desires to hide the truth from us."

Rather than follow the alchemists in seeing "angels, demons, miracles, and divine essences everywhere," Leibniz sees a universe that makes sense in all ways. "I like to believe," Stephenson's Leibniz writes, "that [God] would have chosen wisely and according to some coherent plan that our minds—insofar as they are in God's image—are capable of understanding." And thus, "God arranged things from the beginning so that Mind could understand Nature," says the fictional Leibniz. "But He did not do this by continual meddling in the development of Mind, and the unfolding of the Universe. . . . Rather He fashioned the nature of both Mind and Nature to be harmonious from the beginning."

Stephenson himself seems rather more sympathetic to Leibniz than to Newton, which makes one wonder what he thinks about today's manifestation of the fundamental disagreement over the nature and limits of scientific knowledge. If Stephenson refrains from definitively answering the most profound questions brought up in his book, it is because these great questions are genuine puzzles of the human condition. That he has presented them so successfully in a sometimes trashy novel that affords so many pleasures great and small, is a sufficient accomplishment in itself. ♦

Gore TV network aims 'young, hip';
News channel wants to avoid 'liberal' label
***—Advertising Age*, October 13, 2003**

Parody

GORE TV

The Hip, Not Liberal, All-News Channel

MEMORANDUM

FROM: Al
TO: Development Team

I know we're agreed that I should be "hands-off," but as a former journalist, I still thought I'd provide a little direction for the new format. Let's go get 'em!

Yo! Current News

The 411: People Still Hate Bush

Hey, man, Americans still overwhelmingly hate President George Bush, according to the results of the latest Gore-TV News poll. The Bush Hatred Index stands at 97.6 this week, its highest level since Bush claimed that the war was over after he dissed taxpayers by landing on an aircraft carrier at their expense.

Recovery Attributed to Clinton-Gore Economic Plan, Bro'

Word: The number of Americans filing new jobless claims fell last week to its lowest level since February, industrial production was up in September, the stock market is up, and the core Consumer Price Index has risen only 1.2 percent this year—the lowest figure since February 1966. Experts attribute these healthy economic signs to the lingering effects of the Clinton-Gore economic policies. That is so dope—no'msayn?

U.N. Supports U.S. Plan for Postwar Iraq, Peeps

Yo, homies, the United Nations Security Council, in a 15-0 vote, approved a U.S. draft resolution calling for an international effort, under U.S. leadership, to rebuild Iraq. The vote came just as America was about to sink into a quagmire, straight up, as a result of its unjust unilateral attack on that ancient, peaceful, sovereign nation which had no weapons of mass destruction, you know?

Dude! General Wesley Clark Increasingly Popular

Awesome retired General Wesley Clark, who is brilliant and was a war hero but doesn't support war, gets more popular by the day. Everybody is just blown away by how popular and good-looking and brilliant and totally tubular he is. Bitchin'!