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A NATION OF CRAZY PEOPLE?
PAUL MCHUGH

A Decade Of Reed

One Republican's long, lucrative march through the institutions

by MATTHEW CONTINETTI

The *real* issues of Social Security reform

There is no longer any doubt that Social Security needs to be reformed. The nation's troubled retirement program will begin running a deficit in just 12 years. Overall, the program faces unfunded liabilities of more than $12 trillion. But while the politicians in Washington debate whether this represents a crisis or just a big problem, the Cato Institute believes it is an opportunity to build a new and better retirement program for all Americans.

Ownership

Under the current Social Security system you have no legal, contractual, or property rights to your benefits. What you receive from Social Security is entirely up to the 535 members of Congress. But personal retirement accounts would give you ownership and control over your retirement funds. The money in your account would belong to you—money the politicians could never take away.

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Choice

Choice is part of the essence of America. Yet when it comes to retirement, Congress forces all Americans into a one-size-fits-all, cookie-cutter retirement program, a system that cannot pay the benefits it has promised and under which you have no right to the money you pay in. With personal retirement accounts, workers who wanted to remain in traditional Social Security could do so. But younger workers who wanted a choice to save and invest for their future retirement would have that option.

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The School Lunch Lobby

A charmed federal food program that no longer just feeds the hungry

Consistent with the intent of the original 1946 law, the major purpose of today's school-lunch program is to ensure that children, especially those from poor and low-income families, have nutritious food at school. We created school lunch to feed the hungry. Can we now ask it to fight obesity? How these programs, and the money that travels with them, have grown steadily over the years is a story that illustrates many of the underlying mechanisms of social policy creation in the nation's capital. Since the strength and longevity of the programs comes from an ample and well-balanced diet of public compassion, political sensitivities, and powerful lobbying, change does not come easily. With well-funded and sophisticated national organizations, groups lobby for more federal money while fighting to keep federal mandates to a minimum.

—Ron Haskins

The Accidental Principal

What doesn't get taught at ed schools?

The principal's critical role in the No Child Left Behind era may just be taken for granted. There is growing evidence to suggest that the revolution in school organization, management, and curricular affairs may have left principals behind. In a 2003 report, the nonpartisan research organization, Public Agenda, reported that today's school superintendents want their principals to display prowess in everything from accountability to instructional leadership and teacher quality; but principals themselves don't think they are equipped for these duties. In fact, two-thirds of the principals polled by Public Agenda report that "leadership programs in graduate schools of education are out of touch" with what principals need to know.

—Frederick Hess and Andrew Kelly

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

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Brown Shoe Leather

It's just about the godawfullest, basement-level, give-it-to-the-intern job in journalism nowadays—at least from the sound of Tina Brown's latest *Washington Post/New York Sun* column. What must the unfortunate correspondent on the Upper East Side dinner-party beat actually do? He must, she points out, consume expensively catered food and vintage wine while sitting next to "not just an endless round of U.N. ambassadors, visiting foreign ministers and 57 varieties of dignitaries," but also "their wives." The horror.

And yet she does it anyway! Tina Brown herself slogs through this muck, week in and week out, voluntarily—that's how much she cares about the news, about *getting the story*. For us, her readers. We are blessed.

We are blessed, for instance, in Brown's same aforementioned column, with an answer to the nagging, mystery question: "How come Kofi Annan hasn't been run out of the United Nations on a rail, already?"

It was only after she had dined with Mr. Annan "for the second time in two weeks"—at a Manhattan gala honoring "the Turkish prime minister"—that the dogged Ms. Brown finally uncovered the truth. It turns out the U.N. secretary general has survived in office despite various unchecked genocides and corruption scandals largely because he is "beloved in the higher reaches of New York City" society, whose members "encircle him protectively with feel-the-glow dinners all over town."

Part of it is they just plain like the guy: "his gentle aristocratic charm," his "transparent decency, serenity, and reasonableness," his "luminously graceful Swedish wife." And part of it is *arriviste* insecurity: "Annan's presence in the striving salons of Manhattan's newly rich [lends] the halo of a higher purpose" to their otherwise ho-hum, another-evening-with-Harold-Evans lives.

Mostly, though, they love Kofi Annan up in New York simply because certain people down here in Washington *don't* love him, Tina Brown reveals. "Scapegoating him is another exercise in Republican voice-throwing," after all. So "nobody here [on Park Avenue] can bear to think Kofi Annan could do anything truly shabby." ♦

They're Everywhere, They're Everywhere

The vast neocon conspiracy expands its reach from foreign policy to interior design.

International Penn

In media news, industry mag *Editor & Publisher* reports that the *San Francisco Chronicle* has credentialed the actor, director, and finest loudmouth of his generation Sean Penn to cover this week's Iranian elections. Best we can tell, so far Penn hasn't filed any copy, though *Editor & Publisher* further reports he did bag a big interview last week with Iran's leading presidential "candidate," anti-American Islamic cleric Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani.

Also last week, no doubt as part of his reporting, Penn visited a demonstration of young Iranian filmmakers and schooled them on the finer points of activism. For instance: those "Death to America" chants? Penn doesn't think they're "productive." Not that he doesn't "understand the nature of where it comes from and what its intention is." It's just that "I think the message goes to the American people and it is interpreted very literally."

Scrapbook

Those silly Americans, you know—always taking things so literally.

Eager for an idea of what Penn's Iran reporting will look like, the other day we dug up some of the actor's earlier work for the *Chronicle*—in which Penn described a trip to Iraq he took in December 2003, right around the time Saddam Hussein was pulled from his spiderhole—and, wouldn't you know it, the articles actually contained facts. Such as: "The insurgents are made up of Saddam loyalists, displaced Sunni elite, resentful victims of U.S. raids, the Fedayeen, foreign terrorist cells, and of course many of Hussein's soldiers." All too true.

Penn's metaphors need some work, though. "The fatigue of the trip hits me in the back of the head like a rocket-propelled grenade," he wrote. When Paul Bremer disbanded Hussein's army, Penn wrote that the-now-unemployed Baathist soldiers were told, "You'll never work in this town again." Also, to Penn, a day in war-torn Iraq resembled nothing so much as, um, a day on the slopes: "There's a ski-lodge feel to a house full of war correspondents."

Not quite Hemingway, in other words—but then, who is? Besides, Hemingway never had an escape route: "I call my assistant, Sato, back in San Francisco," Penn wrote, desperate to leave Iraq, "and say 'I don't care if it's a military flight, an NGO or a spaceship, just get me out of here.'" ♦

Wigged Out

In January 2003, The Scrapbook noted the criminal investigations of three officials of the Washington Teachers' Union for misuse of union funds. We dwelled, with perverse admiration, on an FBI affidavit listing the items purchased with union credit cards. President Barbara A. Bullock, who is now serving a nine-year sentence, had in her possession 35 handbags (Chanel, Gucci, Dolce & Gabbana, more Chanel, Fendi, Chanel, Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Chanel, Chanel, etc.), a 288-piece set of Tiffany silverware, a Tiffany white pearl necklace, a silver Tiffany ring, a silver Tiffany watch, a black cashmere cape with fox trim, a long ranch mink coat, one three-piece mink scarf set, 40 pairs of shoes (mostly Bruno Magli and Salvatore Ferragamo), and (our favorite) "11 wigs."

Bullock was in court again this week serving as a witness against her former underlings and co-embezzlers Gwendolyn Hemphill and James O. Baxter II. While she was on the stand, the assistant U.S. attorney asked, "Miss Bullock, would it be fair to say you like to shop?"

"No, that's not fair," she answered. "I *love* to shop."

Union corruption, Bullock testified, also underwrote the catering for a wedding at Hemphill's home, season tickets to the Washington Wizards (Baxter's suggestion), fur coats for Bullock and Hemphill's daughter, a $50,000 silver set purchased in New Orleans for Bullock, and $29,000 for dental implants for Hemphill and her husband.

And did we mention 11 wigs? ♦

Give Us an F in Math

Yes, we screwed up a detail last week on John Kerry's grades at Yale. The 77 he received in French was the second highest grade of his *freshman* year—not the second highest of his undergraduate years. ♦

Casual

A Red Tide in the Affairs of Men

People often use the word "culture" as a synonym for "cuisine." When they claim to adore the "diverse and vibrant culture" of the city they live in, what they're actually trying to say, nine times out of ten, is that they like kung pao chicken. Those of us who grew up in Massachusetts often hear strangers extol our culture. But it is seldom our elegant accents or our well-earned sanctimony that so beguile them. They generally mean that they like fried clams.

That is why the worst outbreak of red tide since 1972 strikes people as not just an inconvenience but a civilizational crisis. Red tide is an algae called *alexandrium fundyense*. The science behind it remains obscure to most people, largely because getting a clear picture of it would gross you out to the point where you wouldn't want to eat clams anymore. Basically, *alexandrium fundyense* produces a brain poison called saxitoxin, which concentrates in clams. This is not such a problem for clams, which do not have brains to speak of, but it is dangerous to the solid plurality of Massachusetts residents who do.

My father used to take me clamming a lot. We did it just the way the commercial clam-diggers did, sloshing along the waterline in Wellington boots with a shovel and a pail. I would walk behind with the pail. My dad would bang the stock of the shovel into the damp sand. If the sand bubbled, that meant there was a clam there, and he would start digging.

There was generally one perfect clam tide every couple of months or so. In my memory, though, they always happened at about 4 o'clock in the morning in the freezing cold. The moon would illumine the bubbles in the pounded sand, the lacy line of surf, the boats just off the beach, and the cliffs. It was immensely romantic, which I suspect was its appeal for my father. For me, at 7 or so, the appeal was in getting to chase seagulls around with a shovel. But there was also the food. We would walk up the cliffs with buckets of pocketbook-sized quahogs clinking in the pail, and these would provide meal after meal for weeks—fried clams, stuffed clams, clam casserole, clam chowder.

Darren Gygi

Pretty much everyone lived this way, so the red-tide outbreak of three decades ago meant minor hardship and major grousing. Most of our neighbors scoffed at the scientists' warnings. They thought red tide was being blown all out of proportion by ecologists, as they were then called, and various granola-eating weirdos. ("All you gotta do is *boil* it out," said the father of a friend.) That same spring of 1972 was when recycling began in our town, and the resistance it met was even more dogged. I've always associated red tide with the last days of the ecological Old Regime, marked by indifference to (and contempt for) the environment.

Our favorite swimming hole back then was called the Lead Mills, a beautiful place where the harbor ran under a disused railroad bridge. Not until a couple of years ago was the place fenced off, when it occurred to some on-the-ball young selectman that the place was called the Lead Mills for a reason.

A popular fishing spot was the power plant at the mouth of the harbor, where it was rumored toxic chemicals were discharged, and gigantic and ghastly fish bred. Most cod near the shore were about the size of your forearm, big ones were the size of your arm, but the ones over by the power plant, veering around with their eerie, O-shaped mouths wide open, looked like golf bags with fins. The fishing is good in pretty much every cubic foot of Massachusetts Bay, but the power plant was where everyone wanted to be. On a Saturday afternoon in summer it looked like one of those oil paintings of the battle of Lepanto, crowded with boats and ropes and thrashing fish.

When I think of America in the 1960s and '70s, I think of garbage tumbling down main streets on windy days. Any chain-link fence would be flecked with napkins and newspapers and potato-chip bags. As a Little League centerfielder, I would always make a preliminary circuit around my position to reconnoiter the heavier concentrations of dog mess and broken glass that might make a sliding catch unadvisable. The year that recycling and red tide made their appearance (along with "Brandy, You're a Fine Girl," if memory serves), I was driving along a highway in the back seat of a friend's car. He took his finished can of Tahitian Treat and chucked it out the window. He saw that I was about to remonstrate with him, because he fixed me preemptively with that 10-year-old's squinting look that combines hatred and pity and said, "What do you think 'Disposable' means, idiot?"

Christopher Caldwell

America's High Schools, 2030

KURT M. LANDGRAF,
PRESIDENT & CEO, ETS

If you knew of a serious problem that would only get worse unless you took action now, wouldn't you start working to resolve it immediately? That's the situation we're facing with regard to the performance of America's public high schools.

According to ETS's most recent nationwide survey of Americans' views on key issues in education, 76 percent of adults believe the U.S. will be less competitive 25 years from now if we don't fix our high schools today. Half say the secondary education system needs either major changes or a complete overhaul.

Clearly, Americans think it's time to get to work on high school reform.

But the survey data also point to a disconnect between the public on the one hand, and high school educators on the other with regard to the nature of the problem and potential solutions.

For instance, our bipartisan polling team of Peter Hart and David Winston asked people whether all high school students should be held to a uniform standard of academic performance regardless of their background. Uniform standards are at the core of efforts to close the achievement gap and overcome what President Bush has called "the soft bigotry of low expectations."

We found that almost 60 percent of parents of K-12 students favor uniform standards, versus only 26 percent of teachers and school administrators. That disconnect on such an important issue is deeply troubling. Over time, it stands to test the public's patience with the pace of reform.

Nevertheless, other results point to common ground for reform, particularly in the areas of curriculum improvement and teacher quality:

- only 9% of adults — and 12% of teachers — believe students are being "significantly challenged" in high school
- 74% strongly favor ensuring that teachers are experts in the subjects they're teaching
- 80% support increased teacher salaries to hire and retain more well-qualified teachers even if it means higher taxes

Good, clear data such as these are helping to inform the national discussion on high school reform. In the coming weeks, we will help move reform forward by ensuring that parents, educators, policymakers and the public are exposed to this important information.

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Good Mormon, Romney?

Regarding Terry Eastland's "In 2008, Will it Be Mormon in America?" (June 6): Though Mitt Romney seems like a nice guy, I hope it won't be "Mormon in America" in 2008. Romney is too liberal, too boring, and he is from Massachusetts, which kind of says it all. It would be the GOP's kiss of death if he were nominated.

Additionally, I doubt the Latter-day Saints will be welcomed in latter-day America, especially in prominent newsrooms and among the chattering nabobs.

If The Weekly Standard really wants to be a cheerleader for a particular Republican for '08, I have two strong suggestions, in this order: (1) Virginia's George Allen and (2) Colorado's Bill Owens. But Romney should not be the nominee: He would not even carry his home state.

Bill Asbell
Dover, NH

If It Feels Good . . .

Daniel Sullivan's "Americans at Prayer" (June 13) explained much, in a few words, about why the United States is a seriously religious and specifically Christian nation. But part of Sullivan's summary remarks, specifically those about "living a Christian (or merely virtuous) life according to how one *feels* rather than what one thinks" (emphasis mine), came exactly to the point, then missed it completely.

"Righteousness exalts a nation" (Proverbs 14:34), whether each individual always feels good about it at the moment or not. "Feeling good" about God's law is considerably less important than thinking about God's law, then heeding it. The focus on "feeling good" over doing what God ordains, over doing what is right, is the source of many of our current predicaments in America.

W.T. Hinds
Maysville, GA

We Let the Dogs In

As a member—though not a spokesman—of the Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery, I found Mark Stricherz's "Who Let the Dogs Out?" (June 13) to be lacking in some simple research. First, Congress did not found Congressional Cemetery; it is, and always has been, a private, nonprofit organization owned by Christ Church since 1812.

Regarding historical information on those interred here, if you check out the Association's website, *www.congressionalcemetery.org*, you'll find information on over 20,000 of the 60,000 people interred at the cemetery. I challenge you to find another private cemetery with that much information on its denizens. All of that data was collected on a volunteer basis (by a dogwalker, in fact).

Finally, as for the supposed intentional abuse of the Hoover family gravesite, in the eight years I have been associated with Congressional Cemetery, I have never seen or heard of anyone letting dogs into the Hoover fenced area for any reason. Natalie Yoder, who is not a member of the Association, could only have made that statement in a poor attempt at humor.

The dogwalking program causes some maintenance issues, but there are many more positive results. The turn-around in the fortunes of Congressional Cemetery over the last few years is a direct result of the dedication and hands-on sweat equity of scores of Capitol Hill dogwalkers.

Patrick Crowley
Washington, DC

Free Guadeloupe

As with everything he writes, P.J. O'Rourke's "My E.U. Vacation" (June 3) was both trenchant and extremely amusing. He failed, however, to answer the question every discerning reader—especially a conservative one—would want to ask: Did writing the article allow him to deduct his vacation as a business expense?

Christopher M. Schnaubelt
Colorado Springs, CO

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Springtime for Dictators?

No one ever thought it would be easy to conquer the outposts of tyranny or to destroy the sponsors of terror. But it shouldn't be that hard, most of the time, to hold American foreign policy to some minimum standards: no rewards for gross acts of dictatorial oppression; no blind eye to facilitation of terrorism; no benign neglect for nuclear proliferation; no free passes for aiders and abettors of tyrants. Are we meeting those standards?

Not as much as we should be, and not as much as we could be.

On May 13, Islam Karimov, the Uzbek dictator, crushed a demonstration in the eastern Uzbek city of Andijon, causing over 500 deaths. This was his response to what had happened in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan in recent months. In those places, autocrats had bowed to popular sentiment and foreign pressure, and yielded power. Karimov chose another path. He was quickly supported by his fellow strongmen Vladimir Putin and Hu Jintao. But U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, who values our military base in Uzbekistan, has apparently (so far) blocked attempts by others in the U.S. government to insist on an investigation of the massacre, or to withhold U.S. aid.

Leave aside the fact that Hamid Karzai in Afghanistan would be more than happy to provide similar bases. Karimov has so far paid no price for his actions. Surely the United States should do what it can to prevent dictators elsewhere from inferring that repression works. Unless the Karimov regime is a lot more central to U.S. foreign policy goals than any of us knew, necessity does not compel Washington to make an exception in this case.

Combine our inaction with respect to Karimov with our passivity in the face of crackdowns in places ranging from China to Zimbabwe to Saudi Arabia in the past couple of months, and there is a real danger that the democratic momentum from earlier this year could be lost. The global story of 1989 happily turned out to be more Berlin Wall than Tiananmen Square—but that wasn't inevitable. Nor is it inevitable that the story of 2005 will turn out to be one of democratic triumphs rather than regressions toward dictatorship. One thing is sure: Dictators around the world (and democrats, too) are watching our actions in response to their various efforts.

As are the terror facilitators: The June 8 *Washington Post* had a front-page article about Abu Ibrahim, a Syrian who, with the tacit approbation of his government, has been for months shuttling Saudi money, and Saudi and other jihadists, into Iraq to kill Americans and Iraqis. Yet it seems Syria remains a safe haven for terror sponsors. The Defense Department apparently refused a CIA request to launch an attack on a Syrian terror-sponsoring target within the last two weeks. Shouldn't it be the case that if Bashar Assad can't police his border, we won't respect it either, since we have to defend ourselves and our Iraqi friends against jihadists infiltrating Iraq from his territory?

Surely our inaction with respect to Syria is a poor precedent if we're fighting a war on terror. For that matter, is the Saudi government doing as much as it can to stop its young men from trooping to Iraq to kill Americans? How much pressure have we put on either government? Wasn't it a big mistake of the 1980s and the 1990s not to make the friends and enablers of terror pay a real price for their activities?

And wasn't it a mistake to allow nuclear proliferators, like A.Q. Khan, and nuclear cheaters, like North Korea and Iran, to move ahead with impunity? Are we being tougher today? Are we doing all we can to destabilize the ghastly Kim Jong Il regime? To help dissidents in Iran? To insist that China not prop up the North Korean regime? Evidently not. If actions hostile to the United States and our interests, and disdainful of our warnings, have no meaningful consequences, surely there will be more of them—many more.

The Bush administration has had a pretty good understanding of who our friends are, and of who our enemies are. More important, it has grasped what kind of regime is likely to be friendly, and what kind tends to be an enemy (or at least a problem). In recent weeks, there have been some good speeches and gestures by the Bush White House, and some useful deeds. But the dictators have had smooth sailing in the last couple of months, and we should worry. It would be unfortunate if the spring of 2005 went down in the history books as a turning point—in favor of the dictators.

—William Kristol

Pro Bono

The president and the singer make common cause on Africa. BY FRED BARNES

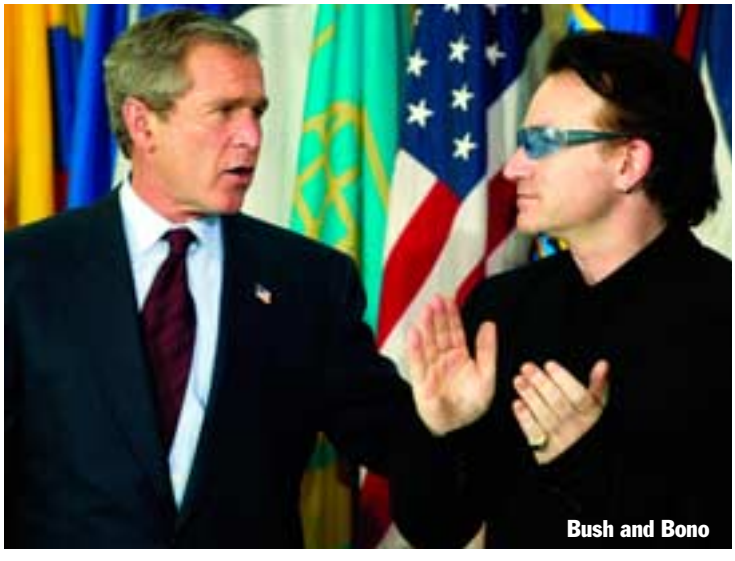
THE QUESTION asked of the president by a British reporter sounded like a setup, aimed at getting Bush to dismiss Bono and reject the U2 singer's pleas for aid to poor, debt-laden countries as mere "rhetoric from rock stars." And, at first, Bush seemed to take the bait. "Part of this world," he said, "we got a lot of big talkers." But Bono, in his view, wasn't one of them. "Bono has come to see me," he said. "I admire him. He is a man of depth and a great heart who cares deeply about the impoverished folks on the continent of Africa. And I admire his leadership on the issue." On top of that, the president took exception to the reporter's condescending reference to rock stars. "I can't remember how you characterized the rock stars," he said, "but I don't characterize them that way, having met the man."

Bush has twice invited Bono to the Oval Office to discuss Africa. The first meeting, in 2002, was joined by several White House aides and Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, the Catholic leader in Washington. Bono is a Catholic. The second, in 2003, involved only Bush, Bono, and Condoleezza Rice, Bush's then national security adviser. Bono and Michael Gerson, the president's counselor and speechwriter, have also struck up a friendship. They lunched together in Philadelphia in May, and Gerson and his wife Dawn attended the U2 concert there that evening. Bono dedicated a song to Gerson, who had never been to a rock concert before. "It was loud," Gerson says.

The Bush-Bono relationship symbolizes the administration's emphasis on aiding sub-Saharan Africa. "It's fair to say the president views this as a major foreign policy focus," a senior Bush aide says. So much so that Gerson spent nine days in early June in Namibia, Mozambique, and South Africa to investigate the effectiveness of the Bush effort. He found that what's known at the White House as PEPFAR—the President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief—is working well, with funds arriving ahead of schedule. But the Millennium Challenge Fund, which finances development projects in poor countries that are democratic and agree to encourage economic freedom, is not up to speed.

The concentration on Africa is not Bush's compassionate conservative agenda for his second term. That's because he began paying serious attention to Africa and other poor countries in his first term. At the press conference where he defended Bono, Bush seemed irritated that he's gotten so little credit for this. He visited Africa in 2003, stopping in Senegal, South Africa, Botswana, and Nigeria. The trip is remembered mostly for the passionate speech he gave on Goree Island in Senegal, once the departure point for slaves going to America. "The spirit of Africans in America did not break," he said then. "Yet the spirit of their captors was corrupted."

At the press conference Bush declared, "We've tripled aid to Africa," repeating what he'd said in his opening statement. At the Q and A session, he was joined by British prime minister Tony Blair. "Africa is an important part of my foreign policy. I remember when I first talked to Condi [Rice], when I was trying to convince her to become the national security adviser, she said, 'Are you going to pay attention to the continent of Africa?' I said, 'You bet.'"



Bush and Bono

Getty / Alex Wong

Indeed, American aid has nearly tripled. The United States provided more than $3.2 billion in official development assistance to sub-Saharan Africa in 2004. And Bush added another $674 in emergency aid in June. "And we'll do more down the road," he said. White House officials said he will announce new programs to help Africa before the G8 summit in July in Scotland. Eradicating poverty in Africa is at the top of the summit's agenda.

Bush's first major effort to help impoverished countries, particularly in Africa, came in 2001 when he began pressuring international financial institutions to provide more grants than loans. His view, an aide says, was that loans leave poor countries "endlessly and hopelessly in debt." The

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

pressure worked. Today, the ratio has changed, from mostly loans to about 45 percent grants. In 2002, Bush established the Millennium Challenge Fund.

Then in his State of the Union address in 2003, the president produced a surprise. He announced a plan to spend $15 billion over five years "to turn the tide against AIDS in the most afflicted nations of Africa and the Caribbean." The program, now expected to cost $16 billion, was developed by Gerson and budget director Josh Bolten and supported by Rice. When they presented it to Bush, he was receptive. His only qualm was whether it would work. The program dwarfs the efforts of the Clinton administration, which spent $225 million on global AIDS relief in 1999.

A few days after the Bush-Blair news conference, the United States and Britain agreed to a $40 billion debt relief program through the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and African Development Bank. It would cover 18 countries, most of them in Africa. In press accounts, Blair got most of the credit, but the program was actually crafted over two years by the Bush administration. To reach agreement, Bush officials had to beat back a series of proposals by Gordon Brown, the British finance minister. These included selling gold reserves or bonds to pay off some of the $40 billion plan. Bono, a champion of debt relief, liked the Bush approach.

Bono has been taken aback by attacks on him for working with the president. But he hasn't backed off. He sent a note of thanks to the White House after the president stuck up for him at the press conference. Several days earlier, Bono ate dinner at Bolten's house along with the Roves and the Gersons. "He's an impressive guy," Gerson says. "He's knowledgeable. He's morally focused. He's also willing to praise the president when he does good things." Gerson says Bush didn't need to be pushed by Bono or anyone else to focus on Africa. But especially in Bono's case, "it's nice to have allies." ♦

A Nation of Crazy People?

Overestimating mental illness in America.

BY PAUL MCHUGH

As THE *New York Times* reported recently, psychiatric epidemiologists from the Harvard Medical School have published studies purporting to demonstrate that some 55 percent of Americans suffer from mental illness in their lifetime. These studies—which cost $20 million, most of it out of the taxpayer's pocket—are based on a survey of 9,282 randomly selected English-speaking subjects over the age of 18 who were seen in their homes by technicians trained to ask specific questions about symptoms believed to indicate mental illnesses. The results led Thomas Insel, director of the National Institute of Mental Health, the studies' primary sponsor, to note that indeed "mental disorders are highly prevalent and chronic." More than half the people of the United States, in other words, have been or are mentally ill. What should we make of this?

Not to put too fine a point on it, we should take the study's conclusions with a huge grain—perhaps a silo would be required—of salt. Diagnostic exaggeration dogs psychiatry today and will not subside until research psychiatrists use ways closer to those of practicing clinicians for recognizing mental disorders and differentiating the serious from the trivial in mental life. Let me explain.

The survey technicians were instructed to fill in a questionnaire by asking the subjects about mental symptoms such as depression and anxiety that they might have experienced in their lives. Such technicians, sticking to the prescribed inventory, essentially act as secretaries, recording what people say they recall from their past. The techs gather no sense of the persons they are meeting—no appreciation of their life circumstances, the issues they have dealt with, what strengths they brought to bear, or what vulnerabilities they overcame, in dealing with the good and bad fortune life brought them. The individual's family, social circumstances, temperament, character, opportunities, successes, and disappointments are all outside the attention of these interrogators.

Instead, the technicians run down their checklist of symptoms with no thought to causes, simply recording a yes or no answer to each. This is not a psychiatric examination; it is barely a census. The assessment does not rest on a trusting relationship, it presumes honesty and openness in the replies, and it assumes that both the subjects and the technicians understand the questions the same way the experts who constructed the inventory did. Finally, by focusing solely on symptoms—indications of disease or disorder—these inventories tend to direct attention to human frailty rather than to human strengths and to emphasize the burdens and obscure the gifts that life has brought these subjects.

At Johns Hopkins, we became aware of these problems after the last national attempt to do a census of the mentally ill—the so-called Epidemiological Catchment Area Study (ECA) of the early 1980s. We followed up similar questionnaires with a complete examination by qualified psychiatrists of a sample of the subjects previously

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towards the vision of 2020

When Sultan Qaboos Bin Said took over leadership of the Sultanate of Oman from his father in the early 1970s, work began immediately on economic development. He took a number of steps to encourage investment, such as improving infrastructure, beginning a programme of privatisation, and joining the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

An ambitious economic strategy was launched in 1995, known as "Vision 2020", designed to achieve financial stability through promoting privatisation, boosting non-oil activity and developing human resources.

In July 2004, the US and Oman signed a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA), thus aiding the expansion of bilateral trade and investment. U.S. Trade Representative Robert B. Zoellick said, "The United States supports the significant changes and reforms that Oman has already undertaken and its continued efforts to promote economic diversification and trade liberalization."

Welcoming this historic move, Oman's Minister of Commerce and Industry, H.E. Maqbool Bin Ali Sultan said, "Thanks to this agreement, we hope there will be more foreign investment from America and more technical cooperation with America."

Businesses are now gearing up for increased opportunities. A leading private sector organisation, W. J. Towell, is a family-owned business that has diversified into a group of companies with interests in over 40 industries, including property, trade, industry and services.

The group has entered into joint ventures with selected international partners such as Unilever, Nestle, Mars, Colgate and Mazda. The company developed the first "Arabized" management software package in the region, and has continued to be an important player in the telecommunications sector.

WJ Towell is one of the main promoters of the proposed natural gas-based aluminium smelter in Sohar, and has been closely involved in the project since its inception. When realised, the project will expand existing infrastructure, provide employment and lead to downstream activities in new areas of manufacture.

The group currently operates in Oman, UAE and Kuwait with plans to extend its activities to new areas by investing in associated companies, facilitating foreign investment and importing skills and technology that support the company and the

national economy. Future plans for the company include investment, expansion and development in the tourism and property sectors.

In keeping with the government's drive of "Omanization", or localization, the company has established a Towell Training Centre, with teachers and training seminars which are open and free to all young Omanis.

Another important Omani company that supports "Vision 2020" is Oman Cables Industry (OCI), a manufacturer of electrical and instrumentation cables. A vibrant, market-conscious organisation, OCI is successfully increasing its turnover and expanded its manufacturing capacity. In 2004 the company achieved a sales target of close on USD 100 million, with profits to match, all within the span of 20 years.

The management of OCI believes that the company's success is based on sound business principles. These principles include good planning, optimum efficiency in operations, cost consciousness, financial controls, a market philosophy which places the customer above all else and a network of vendors to promote exports. OCI exports to GCC countries in Middle East, Asia, South East Asia, Europe and also to Pacific Rim countries.

Qalhat Liquified Natural Gas has also successfully attracted foreign investment. Qalhat LNG has sold approximately 50 per cent of its production to Union Fenosa Gas on a long-term agreement with most of the remainder being sold to Osaka Gas, Mitsubishi Corporation and Itochu Corporation.

QLNG owns a new LNG train which, when completed will produce 3.3 million tonnes per annum. The project is nearly 70% complete and is already ahead of schedule, while adhering to stringent safety and quality standards.

Based on the unparalleled success of QLNG, plans for the development of successive trains are in place. The CEO of QLNG is optimistic about future development, confirming that the plant area has space and capacity for five trains, with substantial interest from foreign investors.

The telecommunications sector has also opened up to investment, following the granting of a license for a second mobile communication provider, awarded to Nawras, a partnership of local and international investors.

H.E. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Abdullah Bin Isa Al Harthi, Minister of Transport and Communications, believes that such an open marketplace will ultimately benefit the consumer, leading to an increase in the services on offer as well as a reduction in pricing.

Nawras has already introduced a new network of distribution, making services available in 450 outlets. The company intends to develop the existing infrastructure which will drive the growth of the telecommunications and technology industry.

Infrastructure development, together with the push to promote tourism, will contribute to the growth of Oman's economy, and will ultimately result in increased job opportunities for the locals.

The government is doing a tremendous amount to implement appropriate strategy, and to create awareness of Oman. The government website, www.omanet.om, provides all the necessary information to interested investors.

assessed. These examinations produced diagnoses that failed miserably to match those generated by the less thorough and clinically inexperienced technicians. The questionnaires depicted individuals who were distressed but could neither accurately identify the nature of their distress nor make confident claims about any mental impairment. Nothing in the present study indicates that its expanded version of the old questionnaires can do any better at diagnosing the subjects.

But this simply raises the question, Why would anyone dream that an inventory of psychic aches and pains would reliably identify mental impairments and distinguish them from the kinds of mental distresses that are part of every person's life?

In addition to relying solely on respondents' yes or no answers to a checklist, the investigators are committed to employing the official *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders—Fourth Edition* (abbreviated DSM-IV), which bases all psychiatric diagnoses on symptoms and their course, not on any fuller knowledge of the person. It is as if public health investigators studying the prevalence of pneumonia over time in the American population were satisfied to call every instance of a cough with a fever and a mucoid sputum a case of pneumonia.

Internal medicine gave up on symptom-based diagnosis more than a hundred years ago, replacing it with diagnosis that rests on knowledge of pathology and what produces it. Thus, internists no longer speak of coughs as racking, brassy, or productive, but as produced by viral or bacterial infection, allergies, or vascular congestion. They no longer differentiate Tertian, Quotidian, and Continuous Fevers but fevers from infection, neoplasia, dehydration, and so on.

DSM-IV makes no attempt to classify mental symptoms or complaints by cause. As a result, it mingles serious and impairing conditions with other forms of mental distress in one hopeless and scientifically indigestible stew. When this diagnostic method is employed for a census of mental disorders in the citizenry, it ominously exaggerates the incidence and the nature of mental troubles. It leaves the public wondering: If more than 50 percent of Americans have at some point been mentally "impaired," what constitutes a "normal" mental life?

Another way of stating the problem is that DSM-IV is the medical counterpart of a naturalist's field guide—say, Roger Tory Peterson's *Field Guide to the Birds*. To develop his guide, Peterson asked expert bird watchers what features of shape, coloring, voice, and range they used to distinguish one warbler from another, and he arranged his guidebook accordingly. As a result, bird watchers became more precise in the terms they used to describe what they saw. But as Peterson noted, amateurs relying on the way birds look often confuse varieties with separate species, while ornithologists turn to biology to make more fundamental distinctions.

Why would anyone dream than an inventory of psychic aches and pains would identify mental impairments?

Similarly, clinical psychiatrists in 1980 wanted to find a way to apply their diagnostic terms consistently. With DSM–IV, they agreed on which symptoms they would use as criteria for each diagnosis, and thus increased their diagnostic consistency. But the best clinicians apply DSM-IV diagnostic terms only after they have fully examined the patient and come to see these symptoms in context. They do not simply run down a checklist of symptoms, count them up, and attach a diagnosis, as did the technicians from Harvard.

Psychiatrists are right now rewriting the diagnostic manual. I believe they will move closer to internal medicine, classifying patients according to what has provoked their symptoms rather than according to the symptoms alone. Only then will scientific and epidemiologic studies in psychiatry improve.

In the meantime, while scientists are working to lift psychiatry beyond the level of a field guide, epidemiologists should stop expending time and money repeating surveys that purport to measure the prevalence of psychiatric disorders but instead only mislead and alarm the public. They should spend their efforts in more productive areas of psychiatric research.

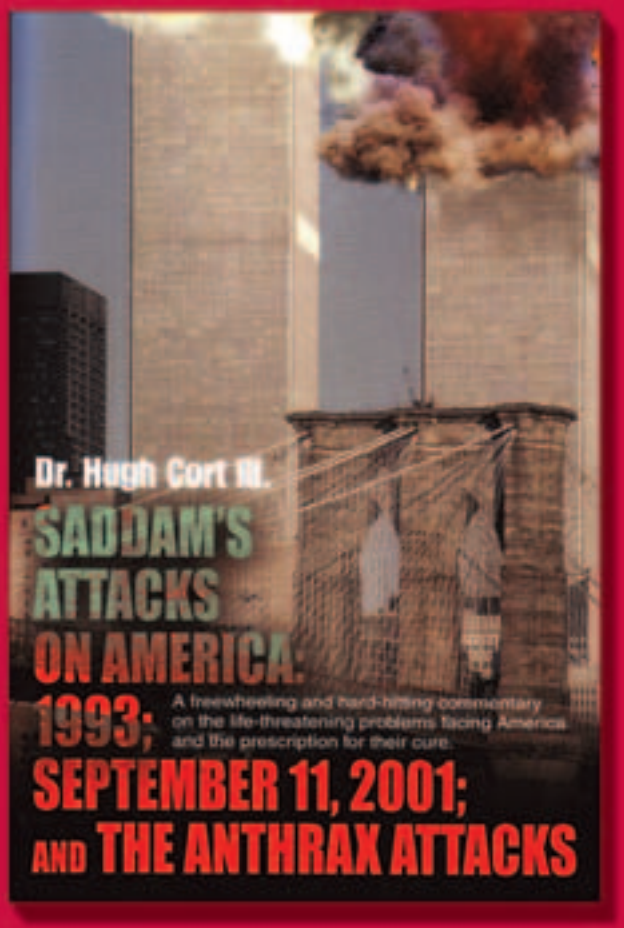
They might, for example, start following people over time, as cohorts with particular life circumstances: They might consider the long-term performance of children with particular classroom-identified dispositions or children exposed to various forms of deprivation or trauma early in life, seeking to discover how these people manage the hurdles they face and which vulnerabilities to mental problems and which resiliencies they manifest in later life. Epidemiologists should attend to studies where patients with particular characteristics—such as temperament, upbringing, or stress—are compared with nonpatients with similar characteristics (so called case-control studies) testing whether these characteristics provoke, protect against, or are incidental to the patients' mental unrest or illness. They should enhance cross-cultural knowledge of how mental impairment, as opposed to mental distress, is expressed by people of differing cultures and exactly what measures help to prevent or treat the case examples.

Analytic studies like these could accomplish much more than descriptive surveys that do little in the long run but exasperate the public and make ephemeral headlines. Along the way, with these more specific studies we would likely discover not that the majority of people are impaired but just how remarkably resilient most of us are and what distinct and wonderful assets most people bring to life. To conduct more of the same kind of empty surveys as are now being done is, I'm afraid, a little crazy—with crazy defined as doing the same thing again and again and expecting a different result. ♦

Iran Will Have Nuclear Bombs by August—Look Out, America!

New York City? Incinerated.

Washington, D.C.? Obliterated.



This isn't Hollywood fiction—it's imminent reality, says **Dr. Hugh Cort,** if our government doesn't act immediately. Iran's nuclear weapons potential is gathering strength—and it has our country's name written all over it. Make no mistake: In October 2004, as the Iranian parliament voted unanimously to resume uranium enrichment, they chanted: "Death to America!"

Like North Korea, Iran will cheat on promises to curtail nuclear weapons. Dr. Cort says we have to face facts:

- Two Iranian security guards were expelled from the U.S. in June 2004 for surveilling and videotaping New York landmarks in preparation for terrorist attacks.
- In February, CBS News reported that Israeli Intelligence says Iran will have nuclear bombs by August! Iran's terror network, Hezbollah, which blew up our troops in the Khobar Towers in 1996, has cells in New York, Washington, and other cities. Iran also has ties with Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda. When Iran gets nukes, it **will** give them to terrorists who **will** blow up our cities.
- An Associated Press article on November 29, 2004 stated that Iran has signed up 30,000 young men willing to be suicide bombers and they have already sent the first wave into Iraq to kill our troops. This is an overt act of war by Iran against us.
- If the Bush administration or Israel doesn't soon bomb Iran's nuclear weapons facilities (at least twelve exist so far), Iran will produce a nuclear bomb and could then hit Tel Aviv or our troops in Iraq with their missiles that can go 1500 miles.
- Every citizen can take action to decrease the imminent danger—and it's a matter of life and death. Every citizen should call his or her Senators and Congressmen and urge them to encourage the Bush Administration to act immediately.

CREDENTIALS: Dr. Hugh Cort is a psychiatrist who's spent years researching terrorism sources. He belongs to the Republican National Committee's President's Club, and the Republican Senatorial Inner Circle. He has been interviewed on over 70 radio stations across America. *Veteran's Vision* magazine invited Dr. Cort to speak at its monthly meeting in Washington D.C., where he shared the podium with the Pentagon's third in command. Dr. Cort plans to run for President in the 2008 Republican primary to help spread his critical message. He wrote ***SADDAM'S ATTACKS ON AMERICA: 1993; SEPTEMBER 11, 2001; and THE ANTHRAX ATTACKS: A Freewheeling and Hard-Hitting Commentary on the Life-Threatening Problems Facing America and the Prescription for Their Cure.***

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The Killing Fields of Zimbabwe

Robert Mugabe imitates Pol Pot.

BY ROGER BATE

Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

AFTER walking several miles in search of work, Martin stops to catch his breath. Sitting on a bench on the outskirts of Zimbabwe's second city, we talk, and he tells me about the troop movement he recently witnessed. He felt the vibrations of the approaching column before he saw it. Perhaps 20 Chinese-made armored troop carriers were heading for the center of Bulawayo, with the aim of quelling unrest and destroying the homes and businesses of those who voted against the ruling regime of President Robert Mugabe back in March.

Mugabe's thugs have become more visible in recent weeks, but they shy away from any naked show of force, especially in daylight. This convoy was traveling under a pathetically transparent disguise. According to independent reports confirmed by Martin, the troop carriers were masquerading as U.N. peacekeepers, with 'UN' letters on the doors of their trucks. But the soldiers carrying heavy weapons in the back were wearing Zimbabwean army uniforms, and they were dispatched to enforce Mugabe's new policy of pushing urban slum-dwellers back to the rural parts from which they come.

Mugabe has lately been looking East for trade and financial support, but also for pointers on oppressing his people, as he follows the lead of Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge, which gutted towns to make for a more pliant populace. After Mugabe handed over white-owned farms to his cronies who didn't know how to farm, a million jobs were lost and the workers and their families migrated to cities and towns. There are now more people in the towns than in the countryside. This aggregation in urban centers has helped these rural people become more politically aware, and diminished the power held over them by the chiefs, headmen, and political councils—all people Mugabe has bought off.

Robert Mugabe

AP / Themba Hadebe

The current attacks on urban centers are part of a corrective strategy to drive perhaps two million people back onto the land. Once there, they will be cut off from the rest of the country and at the mercy of government-controlled food supplies. It is more difficult to starve people in urban areas where the outside world might catch wind of what's going on. As one displaced farmer puts it: "The people don't want to go back to the rural areas because they are afraid and also they know the hardships they will face. In summer, it would be easier for people—even those who have lost the skills—to live off the land from berries and wild mushrooms—but it's the height of winter now and there is nothing."

But controlling this population becomes easier all the time, as millions have fled over the past few years, over 3,000 people die every week of AIDS, and most college graduates, many of whom are activists, leave the country. The result has been an astonishing decline in the population, which is down to around 10 million from over 13 million a few years back. Not that the government minds. In August 2002, Didymus Mutasa, today the head of the secret police, said: "We would be better off with only six million people, with our own people who support the liberation struggle."

For those who remain in Zimbabwe, a Cambodian experiment awaits. Thousands of people made homeless in the government's clean-up campaign are being herded into reeducation camps and told they can have a housing plot if they swear allegiance to the party of President Robert Mugabe. Those who refuse are loaded onto trucks and dumped in remote rural areas where food is scarce. Human rights workers say they are deliberately being left to die in an effort by the Mugabe regime to exterminate opponents.

"This is social cleansing to try to eradicate the opposition," says Trudy

Roger Bate is a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

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Stevenson, an opposition MP whose Harare North constituency includes Hatcliffe, where the homes of 30,000 people have been demolished along with an orphanage for children whose parents have died of AIDS. "It's horrific. They are dumping people in rural areas to get rid of troublesome elements to make sure they can't challenge the regime," she adds.

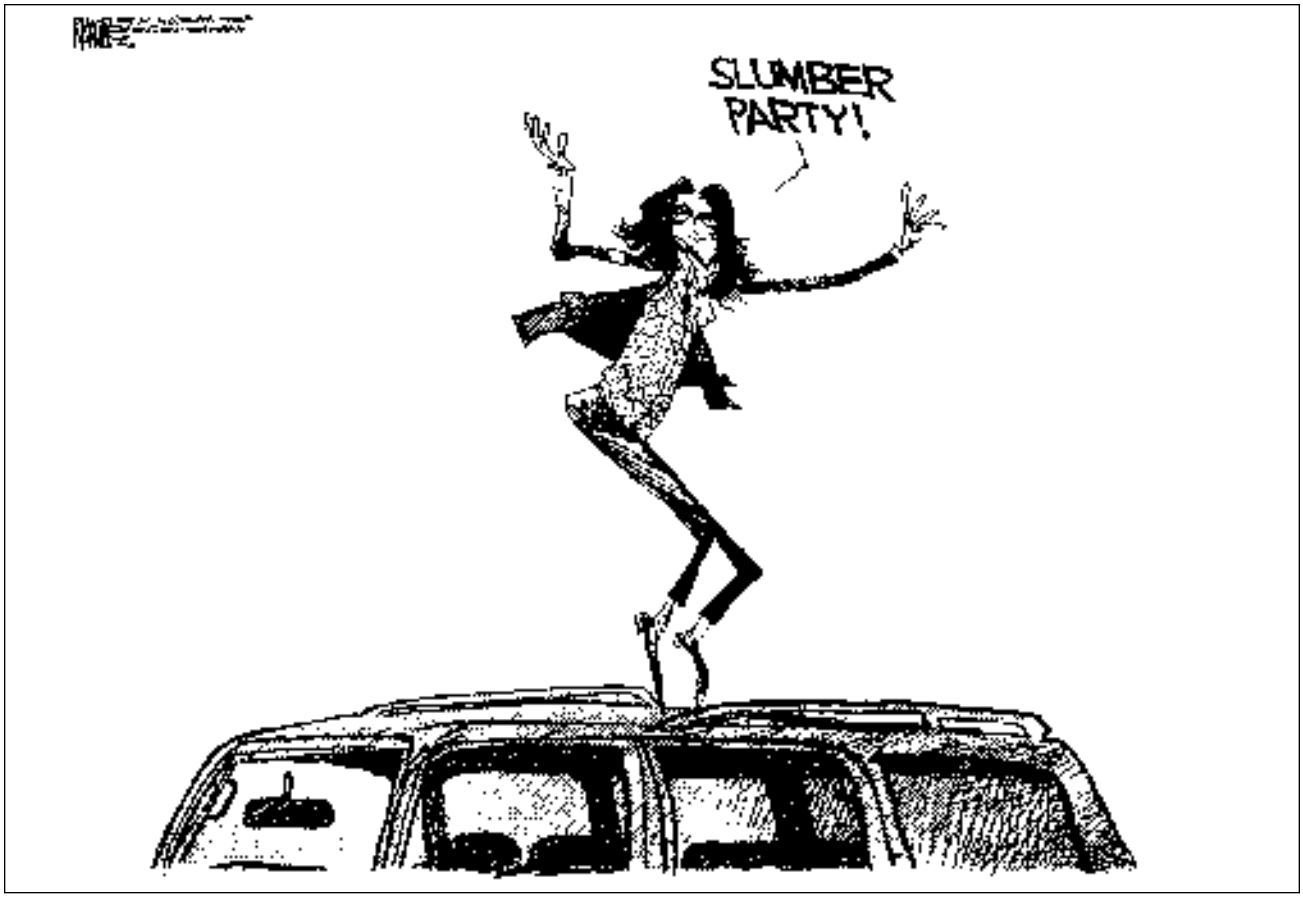
Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the main opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change, called a nationwide two-day strike in early June to protest the destruction of 30,000 dwellings and the arrests of nearly as many people. The strike was not a huge success, because people are too poor to miss an opportunity to trade, but anger is rising among many who have literally nothing to lose—no homes, no jobs, and no food. A senior official in the Bulawayo mayor's office, speaking on condition of anonymity, says the situation has reached the point where a single event or gathering could lead to serious clashes. "They [the government] have deliberately provoked the situation, because they want to have an excuse to declare a state of emergency, get rid of the rules, and deploy the arms they spent millions buying."

In the townships outside Bulawayo, the atmosphere is tense. Police have set up roadblocks to close exit routes. Anyone with a camera, or gathering in a group of three or more persons, faces arrest. On every street corner, plainclothes police and soldiers are on the lookout for any sign of opposition activity.

At the flea market in Emgwamin township, locals recently made a stand, defying the police by setting up stalls only days after hawkers were chased away by baton-wielding police, their produce stolen by the state. On the walls nearby, anti-Mugabe graffiti declared what most were too scared to say: "We need fuel, maize and sugar, let's fight now. Mugabe must go."

But Mugabe's grip on the country is tightening. With arms shipments from China, including heavy assault rifles, military vehicles, riot equipment, and tear gas, Mugabe isn't going anywhere. One opposition figure sounded a note of caution for those considering an uprising. "Remember these towns were built by white colonialists who were expecting insurrection and planned very effectively to counter it," she told a local newspaper. Perhaps the saddest part of the arms sales to Mugabe is that South Africa, which suffered under the kind of apartheid that Mugabe is inflicting upon his opponents, is supplying important spare parts for helicopters that will be used to suppress any significant local uprising.

When will Mugabe's neighbors, as well as the United States and the United Kingdom, intervene? By the end of this year, Mugabe may be well on his way to halving his population. ♦



Michael Ramirez

Bench Warfare

The coming battle over President Bush's Supreme Court nominee. **BY DUNCAN CURRIE**

By now, Ralph Neas, head of the liberal group People for the American Way (PFAW), must be used to hyperbolic appraisals of his influence from both friend and foe. The "101st senator," Ted Kennedy once called him on the Senate floor. "When it comes to judicial nominations," opined the conservative *Wall Street Journal* editorial page, "Mr. Neas might as well be the one and only Senator. The 10 Democrats on the Judiciary Committee salute and follow [his] orders."

Neas takes this all in stride. "I've been attacked, I believe, 53 times by the *Wall Street Journal* editorial board," he laughs, and he deems it a source of "great pride" for PFAW. As for the *Journal*'s exaggerated estimate of his power, he adds, "I can't think of anything more absurd."

He needn't be so modest. Along with Alliance for Justice chief Nan Aron and Leadership Conference on Civil Rights boss Wade Henderson, Neas is one of Washington's three most powerful liberal activists in the judicial wars. Whatever their personal sway over Senate Democrats, Neas, Aron, and Henderson sit atop a vast assembly of nationally known progressive interest groups, including NOW, NARAL, the National Women's Law Center, the NAACP, the AFL-CIO, and the Sierra Club.

Aron's Alliance and Henderson's Leadership Conference are both umbrella organizations, the latter being the oldest and largest such civil rights association in America. But along with PFAW, they're also the principal helmsmen of the Coalition for a Fair and Independent Judiciary. According to Neas, the coalition boasts "about 70 active organizations," and they function together like a well-oiled machine. Over the past few years, Neas says, there has been a coalition meeting "almost every day." The steering committee meets "at least once a week," as do various legislative and legal task forces. And coalition members are in daily communication by phone.

PFAW and the Alliance for Justice have done much of the intellectual spadework for those who are mounting the opposition to President Bush's more conservative judicial nominees. PFAW has published multiple editions of *Courting Disaster*, its analysis of how a Supreme Court dominated by the likes of Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas might affect American law. The Alliance for Justice, meanwhile, has kept a close eye on the bench through its Judicial Selection Project, which Aron spearheaded in 1985. Both groups have provided exhaustive research on such appellate court picks as Charles Pickering, Miguel Estrada, and Priscilla Owen.

But that was all just warm-up for the Big One: the fight over the next Supreme Court nominee, which may well come in the fall, should Chief Justice William Rehnquist's health force him to retire. The coalition's network of some 70 active groups may soon balloon. "If there's a Supreme Court nomination," Neas predicts, "there'll be many more organizations involved."

He would know. In 1987, Neas, Aron, Henderson, and other liberal bigwigs piloted the 300-member "Block Bork" coalition, a motley alliance of local and national advocacy groups. "Block Bork" was of course successful, though similar efforts in 1991 failed to keep Justice Thomas off the bench. During the Thomas hearings, irate Republicans claimed PFAW and the Alliance for Justice were feeding anti-Thomas dirt to the offices of Democratic senators on the Judiciary Committee. The *Washington Post* even reported on an "increasingly symbiotic relationship between committee staffers, liberal interest groups and the news media."

It was the same charge Republicans had made during the Bork hearings. And it's the same charge they've made since George W. Bush entered the White House in 2001. PFAW and others deny they brandish inordinate control over Senate Democrats. That may be true. But it's also true, as a series of judicial memos leaked in November 2003 showed, that Democratic staffers seem especially interested in how "the groups" will react to a given nominee. And those staffers rely heavily on the opposition research of PFAW in particular.

To be sure, comparable groups on the right provide much of the intellectual firepower in support of Bush's nominees. The conservative groups run a conference call every Monday, and a regular Tuesday meeting under the aegis of the Republican National Committee. But the liberal organizations seem more numerous, more coordinated, and compelled by a greater sense of urgency. They've certainly been at it a lot longer. Says a senior GOP Senate aide, "They're much better—and have been much better, historically—at revving up their groups, and communicating, and telling senators what they'd like to see done." Still, the aide adds, "We're starting to see more Republican groups now."

Most prominent of the new conservative groups is the Committee for Justice, whose formation in July 2002 was prompted by the defeat of the Pickering nomination. C. Boyden Gray, White House counsel during the first Bush presidency, serves as chairman, while Sean Rushton is the group's executive director. Rushton pings out daily emails to around 200 Washington "conservative types" (mainly activists and Hill staff) and 800-1,000 journalists. These frequently offer links to op-eds or rebuttals of PFAW's latest mis-

Duncan Currie is a reporter at The Weekly Standard.

AP / Ron Thomas

Wade Henderson, Ralph Neas, and Nan Aron at an anti-John Ashcroft event, January 2001

chief. "We communicate with the 'grass tops,'" Rushton explains, "but we have no grassroots ambition at all, and no grassroots component."

Some of the grassroots work falls to wealthy social-conservative groups, such as Concerned Women for America and James Dobson's Focus on the Family, and the Judicial Confirmation Network. But the right's chief grassroots fundraiser on the judicial issue is an organization called "Progress for America," which came into being as a pro-Bush 527 in the 2004 campaign. During the recent filibuster row, Progress for America put out some $3 million worth of ads zinging the Democrats and defending Bush's nominees.

That may seem a hefty chunk of change. But consider that PFAW and its allies spent around $5 million on a pro-filibuster campaign. According to *Business Week*, MoveOnPAC, an outgrowth of the liberal web group, raised at least $1.3 million "nearly overnight" to save the filibuster. "The Democratic party's having trouble raising money," says veteran conservative leader Gary Bauer. "But not these left-wing activist groups."

Bauer regrets that, when it comes to judges, the right appears far less unified than the left. Why? "The business part of our coalition," he says, "all too often is AWOL." Traditionally, the business lobby has shied away from disputes over moral issues such as abortion. And many see the ongoing judicial struggle as an extension of the culture wars. "The anti-business groups on the left are very active," says Boyden Gray. "The pro-business groups on the other side are not." Nevertheless, he and Rushton both expect the National Association of Manufacturers to play a significant role in any Supreme Court battle.

And what a battle it will be. Last week, while Progress for America trumpeted plans to spend at least $18 million in support of Bush's choice, PFAW named its own Supreme Court Team. Not only will the liberal coalition resist adding another conservative to the bench. It may also fight Bush's elevation of Scalia or Thomas to chief justice. "I would hope that a majority of the Senate would defeat a Scalia or a Thomas nomination," Neas says. But if not, PFAW would support Democrats' "using any parliamentary option at their disposal, including the filibuster," to block a Scalia/Thomas ascension. Neas gets a bit cagier when the subject turns to Bush's new addition to the court. "I would rather not go into this," he says, "for strategic purposes."

Aron is much less guarded. I tick off a list of possible Supreme Court nominees and ask her whether each would be worthy of a Democratic filibuster. The Third Circuit's Samuel Alito? Yes. The Fifth Circuit's Emilio Garza? Yes. The Fourth Circuit's Michael Luttig? Yes. The Fifth Circuit's Edith Jones? Yes. The D.C. Circuit's John Roberts? Yes. The Fourth Circuit's Harvie Wilkinson? Yes. Washington lawyer Miguel Estrada? Yes. Senator John Cornyn? Yes. Senator Jon Kyl? Yes.

The only one Aron doesn't brand filibuster-worthy is Larry Thompson, George W. Bush's former deputy attorney general and now PepsiCo's general counsel. "We're still researching his record," she explains. Like Neas, she'd back a filibuster of Scalia or Thomas's elevation to chief justice. In general, Aron views any anti-*Roe* nominee to the federal bench as constituting an "extraordinary circumstance."

As the liberal coalition mobilizes, replenishes its war chest, and gears up for all-out combat, what might the White House do to prepare a response? Bring in a Supreme Court point man. The first Bush administration, Gray says, recruited ex-Reagan chief of staff Ken Duberstein as a "special government employee" to assist with the confirmations of Justice Thomas and Justice David Souter. Duberstein counted votes, marshaled support, played the PR game, and organized debate prep. "He was everywhere," Gray recalls.

Gray, who has close ties to Karl Rove and GOP Senate leader Bill Frist, expects the current Bush White House to replicate that strategy. "I think the plan is there," he says. But Bauer is less certain. "Karl [Rove] is a smart guy, so presumably he knows how devastating it would be if the president was unable to get a solid, open conservative on the Supreme Court." But do they have a strategy? Says Bauer, "I just don't see much." ♦

Socialized Medicine on Life Support

The Supreme Court of Canada finally gets one right. BY DAVID GRATZER

GOVERNMENT HEALTH-CARE enthusiasts in the United States have long looked to Canada as a leading light of health care fairness and equity. From a distance, Canada may seem to have it all: modern medicine and universal insurance. Up close, the story is quite different. On June 9, the Supreme Court of Canada called the system dangerous and deadly, striking down key laws and turning the country's vaunted health care system on its head. The ruling aptly symbolizes the declining enthusiasm for socialized medicine even in socialist nations. American legislators—such as those in the California Senate who approved a single-payer plan this month—should take note.

The Supreme Court of Canada is arguably the most liberal high court in the Western world, having recently endorsed the constitutionality of gay marriage and medical marijuana. Most legal scholars expressed surprise that the justices even agreed to hear this appeal of a health care case twice dismissed by lower courts. Involving a man who waited almost a year for a hip replacement, the bench decided that the province of Quebec has no right to restrict the freedom of a person to purchase health care or health insurance. In doing so, they struck down two Quebec laws, overturning a 30-year ban on private medicine in the province. The wording of the ruling, though, has implications beyond Quebec, and could be used to scrap other major parts of Canada's federal health care legislation.

The decision isn't simply a surprise, it's an earthquake—as if a Soviet court had ruled that not only could a Russian entrepreneur open a chain of restaurants, but he could issue stock to finance the scheme.

What would drive the bench to such a profound ruling? Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin and Justice John Major wrote: "The evidence in this case shows that delays in the public health care system are widespread, and that, in some serious cases, patients die as a result of waiting lists for public health care."

This outcome would not have been possible without the persistence of one man: Jacques Chaoulli. A Montreal physician, Chaoulli was so angered when a government bureaucrat shut down his private family practice that he went on a hunger strike. After a month, he gave up and decided that only the courts could help his fight.

With an eye on a legal challenge, Chaoulli tried his hand at law school—but flunked out after a semester. Undeterred, he sought the help of various organizations to support his efforts. None would. He decided to proceed anyway, choosing to represent himself. His legal fight, costing more than a half million dollars, was funded largely by his Japanese father-in-law.

But Chaoulli was not completely alone. He asked one of his patients for help. A former chemical salesman with a bad hip, the patient agreed. Their argument was simple: Quebec's ban on private insurance caused unnecessary suffering since waiting lists have grown so long for basic care.

The woes of Chaoulli's patient are all too common. Canadians wait for practically any diagnostic test, surgical procedure, or specialist consultation. Many can't even arrange general care. In Norwood, Ontario, for example, one family doctor serves the entire town, and he can only take 50 new patients a year. The town holds an annual lottery to choose the lucky 50.

According to Statistics Canada, approximately 1.2 million Canadians lack a family doctor and are looking for one. Others seek more urgent care. Toronto was shaken recently when the media reported that a retired hockey legend was forced to wait more than a month for life-saving chemotherapy because of a bed shortage at the largest cancer hospital in the country. American companies now routinely advertise in major Canadian dailies, offering timely health care—in the United States. No wonder that, a few years back, more than 80 percent of Canadians rated the system "in crisis."

And now the Supreme Court of Canada agrees. Moreover, it's not alone in tiring of the shortcomings of socialized medicine. Throughout Europe, the story is one of a slow but steady abandonment of public health care.

British prime minister Tony Blair recently won reelection on a platform that called for tripling the number of surgeries contracted out to private firms. Across the Channel, private medicine flourishes. Tim Evans of the influential think tank Centre for the New Europe observes: "There is no ideological debate about who provides the care [in continental Europe]. . . . There are only good hospitals and bad hospitals, not public and private ones." Even in Sweden, patients choose among public and private hospitals. St. Goran's, the largest hospital in Stockholm, is privately run and managed.

And yet, in the United States, legislators continue to flirt with socialized medicine. In recent months, those in California, Maine, and Vermont have voted for some type of single-payer system. These policymakers should realize that U.S. health care may have its woes, but the siren song of socialized medicine offers no solution. Indeed, even the Supreme Court of Canada recognizes that socialism for health care is a prescription for an early grave. ♦

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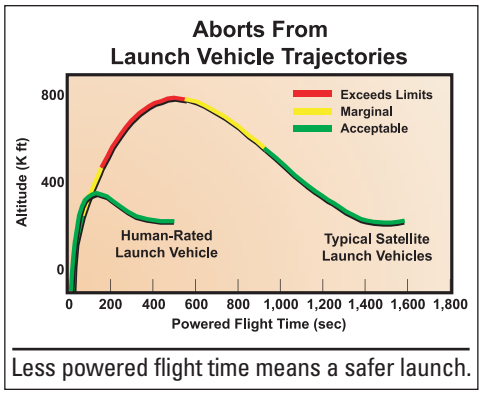

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*Reliability and Crew Safety assessment for Solid Rocket Booster/J-2S Based Launch Vehicle; Science Applications International Corporation

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A Decade of Reed

One Republican's long, lucrative march through the institutions.

By Matthew Continetti

Money is like water down the side of the mountain. It will find a way to get around the trees.

—Ralph Reed

It was June 4, a Saturday, a little after 9 A.M., at the Golden Corral restaurant in Lawrenceville, Georgia, about 20 miles north of downtown Atlanta, and Phyllys Ransom—red hair, white skin, blue eyes; a walking, talking American flag—was explaining why she supports Ralph Reed.

"Integrity is something people talk a lot about, but so few people have," Phyllys said.

A few feet behind Phyllys—"Make sure you spell my name right: P-h-y-l-l-y-s"—Reed shook hands with his supporters.

"I just think Ralph is authentic," Phyllys said. "And when you're authentic, you're comfortable. You see it in his comfort level. You see it in his—this is a word I like to use—congruence."

Reed was the executive director of the Christian Coalition from 1989 until 1997, when he resigned and moved to Duluth, a Georgia town not far from Lawrenceville, where he has since made a lucrative living as a public affairs and public relations specialist. Which living, however, has not kept Reed from answering the siren song of electoral politics. On February 17 he announced his candidacy for lieutenant governor of Georgia. The Republican primary—he already has one opponent, state senator Casey Cagle—is a year away, on July 18, 2006. If Reed wins, and then wins the general election that fall, he will be the first Republican lieutenant governor in the history of Georgia.

And so far, it seems, things are going Ralph Reed's way. He has a vast fundraising network, assembled over 20 years in national Republican politics as a strategist, field organizer, and gadfly. Plus, a lot of Georgia Republicans love him—he served as chairman of the state party from 2001 to 2003. During his tenure Georgia voters elected a new Republican senator, Saxby Chambliss, and the first Republican governor since Reconstruction, Sonny Perdue. Once his stint as party chairman was over, Reed spent a year working on the campaign of someone Georgia Republicans love even more, President George W. Bush. Then, too, and most important—certainly they think so—the local political reporters, along with their Washington brethren, have pronounced Reed the "frontrunner" over a year before any actual voters will cast any actual votes. The race is all but over, you'd think.

Except you'd be wrong. And not because of anything within Reed's control, come to think of it. I watched him spend half an hour speaking to members of the Gwinnett County Republican party, and he knows how to work a crowd. He set specific goals ("We're going to assemble a grassroots army of 25,000 volunteers"); he shared his knowledge of policy ("We need to develop magnet technical high schools in every county of Georgia"); he waxed idealistic ("If we will not be afraid of our own philosophical shadow, if we will be who we really are, people will flock to us"); and he pushed all the right emotional buttons ("I know this is going to come as a surprise to some of you in this room, but the media is not for us").

He has stage presence. Reed's speech contains no malapropisms, and his rhetoric is polished. Also, he must have taken Stage Movement 101 at the George Dubya School of Public Speaking, because he has all the physicality that the president brings to the stump, and he uses it to his advantage. His shoulders are thrust back, his head juts forward, his finger point is practiced, his hand-chop steady like a knife. It makes for a riveting performance. Every now and then, someone who is decidedly *not* a member of the Gwinnett County Republicans—a busboy in an apron, a glassy-eyed college student in Abercrombie & Fitch-wear—would walk over from the dessert trough to watch Reed, captivated by the show.

Once the speech was over, once the audience gave him a standing ovation, Reed started mingling with the crowd.

As he milled about the restaurant, I fell into conversation with Phyllys, who is on Reed's campaign steering committee. Of Reed's opponent, state senator Cagle, Phyllys said, "Casey's a nice man. He's a good Republican," but he doesn't have "what it takes." Phyllys is disappointed in the tone of the campaign so far. "There's so

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much subterfuge," she said. "Ralph's been attacked. You know that. But when you're up to something big, guess what?"

She held her hands in the air.

"You're going to be attacked."

Phyllys is right, of course. Reed *is* under attack. And the reason Reed is under attack—and the reason he isn't giving any on-the-record interviews to reporters—is that, for once, his political timing is off. He launched his first campaign for public office in Georgia just as the investigation into his longtime friend and business associate Jack Abramoff was slouching toward completion in Washington.

Thomas Fluharty

Ralph Reed

Abramoff, as all inside-the-Beltway types know, is the ex-lobbyist who, along with his partner, the public affairs specialist Michael Scanlon, convinced six Indian tribes to pay up to $82 million over three years in exchange for . . . well, actually, no one exactly is sure what Abramoff and Scanlon did for all that money. Which is a problem.

As Andrew Ferguson detailed in these pages last year (see "A Lobbyist's Progress," December 20, 2004), Indian tribes operating casinos would hire Abramoff to represent their interests in Washington, and Abramoff would tell the tribes that they'd be out of their minds if they didn't hire Scanlon, too. Probably Abramoff suggested this because disclosure laws require anyone who spends 20 percent or more of his billable hours browbeating lawmakers to register as a lobbyist. And once you register as a lobbyist, you must also disclose your clients, and how much they pay you. Until last fall, Abramoff was a lobbyist—from 1995 until 2001 at Preston Gates Ellis & Rouvelas Meeds LLP, then from 2001 to 2004 at Greenberg Traurig LLP—and thus his ability to bleed his clients in public, one likes to think, was limited by a sense of propriety.

Scanlon, however, was not a lobbyist, and so he never had to disclose his clients; never had to say how much he was charging them, either. And so, while the tribes paid millions of dollars directly to Abramoff's firm—the Mississippi Choctaws paid Preston Gates $2.4 million in the first half of 1999 alone—they would also pay Scanlon multiples of that. Scanlon would then send some of those millions back to Abramoff. The money piled up. Though exactly how much money, no one is sure.

Occasionally Abramoff and Scanlon would have to do something for the money, and that's where Ralph Reed enters the story. From 1999 until 2002, organizations affiliated with Scanlon and Abramoff paid Reed's company, Century Strategies, at least $4.2 million for "grass-roots" support—working the phones, compiling voter lists, writing ad copy, and so forth. Reed, who once said that gambling was a "cancer" on the body politic, who told *National Journal* in 2004 that he has been "opposed to gambling throughout my entire career," used the money to shut down casinos that threatened the business of the casinos paying Abramoff.

Reed first acknowledged that he had accepted fees from Abramoff-related firms last August, when his company issued the following statement:

> Ralph Reed and Century Strategies have long been opposed to the expansion of casino gambling. Century Strategies was approached about assisting with a broad-based coalition opposed to casino gambling expansion, and we were happy to do so. Our firm recruited coalition partners, raised funds, and mobilized grass-roots citizens. Our work was legitimate, lawful, and effective. We helped to close illegal casinos that violated federal and state law. Greenberg Traurig also raised funds and recruited coalition members. Although we were aware that Greenberg had tribal clients, we had no direct knowledge of their clients or interests. At no time were we retained by nor did we represent any casino company.

All of the above is true—technically, and up to a point. Yes, Century Strategies was never "retained by," never "represented" a "casino company." Century Strategies was retained by people *who were retained by* a "casino company." The statement is also incomplete. It mentions

only Greenberg Traurig. But it's now clear that Century Strategies was paid at least $1.8 million from Michael Scanlon's company, Capitol Campaign Strategies, and another $2.3 million from the American International Center—the "think tank" that Scanlon and Abramoff had set up in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, two blocks from the ocean. Why didn't Century Strategies mention those disbursements?

In their conversations with me, members of Reed's office stressed that they have always "said the same thing" about where the money came from. They stressed, further, that Reed had been given assurances that the money he was paid came from Preston Gates's and Greenberg Traurig's general business revenues, not revenues from Indian casinos. Century Strategies has turned over tax documents and financial records to the lead congressional committee investigating Abramoff. Reed himself has pledged to cooperate with the investigation.

Scratch that: the *investigations*. At first only the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs—John McCain, chairman—was examining Abramoff and Scanlon's dealings with the tribes. The Indian Affairs Committee held hearings on the matter last September and November—another is scheduled for June 22—and then it was off to the races. The Senate Finance Committee opened an investigation into Abramoff and Scanlon's various nonprofits, which took "donations" from the Indian tribes and arranged luxurious junkets for congressmen who legislate on Indian gaming. On top of all this, the executive branch has assembled a task force to investigate Abramoff, drawing from the Interior Department, the IRS, the National Indian Gaming Commission, and the Justice Department. According to the *New York Times* the FBI has assigned over 30 agents to the case. Not to mention, of course, the swarm of Washington journalists who have buzzed, like moths to a flame, over each and every detail of the story.

And who can blame them? It's some story. Abramoff's connections with the Washington GOP establishment ran so deep, his lucre spread among so many conservative political action committees and nonprofits, that the Indian gaming scandal has become, in a few short months, a sort of epic poem, a Homeric tragedy about the moral collapse of the storied Republican Revolution of 1994. Those connected to Abramoff—Michael Scanlon, once a spokesman for House Majority Leader Tom DeLay, another former DeLay staffer named Ed Buckham, antitax activist Grover Norquist, and others—have become symbols as well: symbols of how onetime anti-Washington political insurgents traded in their idealism for gobs of corporate cash.

Democrats have lapped all this up, as you might imagine—and they have tried to exploit it, too, for possible electoral gain in next year's midterm elections. Not a day goes by, it seems, without an email from the Democratic National Committee or some "good-government" group devoted to the scandal. Over a year out from the election, in fact, Democrats give every indication that they plan to run a national anticorruption campaign against the Republican Congress, not unlike the ones Republicans ran in the days of House Democratic bosses Jim Wright and Dan Rostenkowski. They will charge that since taking power a decade ago the Republican majority has failed to cut the size of government or change "the way Washington works"; that the Republican Congress has ceded lawmaking to special interests and corporate lobbies; that the GOP has been more interested in graft than in governing.

It's Reed's misfortune that he happens to have worked with Abramoff on several Indian gambling campaigns. And yet it's also striking that the $4.2 million his firm collected from Abramoff and Scanlon over four years may damage his national political ambitions. Because when you look at Reed's private-sector career as a whole, such a sum seems hardly worth getting worked up over. It's pocket change.

In 1994 Ralph Reed's talent at political organizing helped to bring about the first Republican congressional majority in over 40 years. But in 2006 Reed and his friends' talent at profiting from that majority status may help to bring about a Republican meltdown.

How's that for a turnabout?

Reed turns 44 this Friday, June 24. He was born six weeks premature in 1961, in Portsmouth, Virginia, and to this day his frame is slight, his face preternaturally boyish. Although Reed has spent most of his adult life in Georgia, he did not move there until 1976, when his family settled in the small town of Toccoa, in the northeastern part of the state. Reed was in high school at the time. Georgia was the fifth state, and Toccoa the seventh town, he had called home. He entered the University of Georgia in 1979 and was quickly drawn to campus politics. He rose through the ranks of campus Republicans, and spent the summer between his sophomore and junior years in Washington, as an intern on Capitol Hill and at the national headquarters of the College Republicans.

The national chairman of College Republicans in 1981 was a young Brandeis graduate, Jack Abramoff. The executive director was a young Harvard graduate, Grover Norquist. Sharing the same convictions, and the same idea of student politics as street theater, Reed, Abramoff, and Norquist became fast friends. Paul Erickson, who worked at College Republicans alongside the trio, later told reporter Nina Easton that "Ralph was Grover's clone." Reed enjoyed the atmosphere so much, in fact, he stayed

Daryl Heikes / U.S. News and World Report

Reed leading a September 1983 protest in Washington after the Soviet downing of Korean airliner KAL 007

on at the national headquarters through the fall semester.

In 1983 he succeeded Norquist as executive director. Also in 1983—and of considerably more interest to his future biographers—Reed had a religious conversion. One Saturday night that September, he was at Bullfeathers, a bar on Capitol Hill, drinking and carousing, when he decided, "This isn't as fun as it used to be." He left the bar, walked to the nearest phone booth, opened the phone book, and found a listing for Evangel Assembly of God church, a Pentecostal congregation in Camp Springs, Maryland. He went to services the next morning. Abramoff later told the *Los Angeles Times*: "There were some real hard political hacks who were probably skeptical when Ralph went through this. . . . I thought it would be positive in his life, as it has been."

Reed quit drinking and smoking, but he did not quit politics. Under Abramoff and Norquist, the College Republicans became more conservative and more activist. They also attracted more publicity. Reed helped to arrange the group's spectacular protests. In September 1983, after Soviet military jets shot down Korean airliner KAL 007, Reed led a march of young conservatives through downtown Washington—"his tie knot loosened, his fists pumping, his face twisted in anger," according to Easton. Reed's photo was published in *U.S. News and World Report*. In 1984, as president of Students for America, a nationwide group for religious conservative college students, Reed helped to organize public celebrations of the first anniversary of the invasion of Grenada. In 1985 Reed set up a "mock Sandinista prison camp" on the west lawn of the Capitol building. "Everyone who's going on the abduction, come over here!" the *Washington Post* quoted him shouting.

What the trio at College Republicans was doing, in retrospect, was turning a backwater organization into a bastion of "movement conservatism"—a sort of School of the Americas for future conservative shock troops. This is not a glib analogy. There was always a paramilitary flavor to the three friends' politics, Norquist's in particular. They had read the works of New Left authors such as Saul Alinsky. They courted anti-Communist guerrillas—and "former" Maoists—such as Angola's Jonas Savimbi. They were self-consciously working toward a conservative revolution in America—albeit one that would be achieved at the polls.

Reed loved political organizing. He loved political theater. But in the fall of 1985 he gave it all up to pursue a doctorate in history at Emory University. His dissertation, finished in 1991, weighs in at 515 pages and is entitled "Fortresses of Faith: Design and Experience at Southern Evangelical Colleges, 1830-1900." As the title indicates, Reed's study examined the history of religious higher edu-

cation in the South. Besides the fact that it was written at all, the dissertation is notable for the way in which Reed chastises the institutions of higher learning he writes about for their racism.

And yet Reed never pretended he was about to take up a career in academia. That he wrote the dissertation and completed his Ph.D. is evidence, in all probability, of an unquenchable ambition, a desire to prove himself in a liberal academic setting. (To this day, when people refer to him as "Dr. Reed," he doesn't seem to mind.) He continued to participate in Republican politics throughout graduate school. In January 1989, at a Students for America dinner in Washington, D.C., Reed met Christian broadcasting magnate Pat Robertson, who had just run a failed presidential campaign the year before.

Robertson's campaign wasn't a total failure, actually—he came in second to Bob Dole in the 1988 Iowa caucuses, scaring the bejeezus out of the Republican establishment—and he wanted to start an organization devoted to bringing social conservatives into Republican politics. After dinner Robertson asked Reed if he wanted to run the group. At first Reed demurred; he returned to Georgia and his schoolwork, but soon found he couldn't support a wife and child on a doctoral candidate's income. In September he accepted Robertson's offer and moved to southeastern Virginia, home of Robertson's television evangelism empire.

The Christian Coalition was incorporated as a nonpartisan, tax-exempt nonprofit. But its political allegiance was always clear. In October 1990 the National Republican Senatorial Committee gave the Coalition $64,000 in what Reed would later call "seed money." The seeds sprouted and grew like crazy. Within a few years under Reed's leadership the Coalition became, as Nina Easton describes in her book *Gang of Five*, "a $12 million-plus lobbying machine" that boasted "250,000 dues-paying members" and "1.6 million potential allies."

Read press accounts from the Coalition's early history, and you find that, when he spoke to the press, Reed would use the same language he had used a decade earlier at College Republicans. In 1991, in a quote that has been hung around his neck ever since, he bragged to Norfolk's *Virginian-Pilot*: "I want to be invisible. I do guerrilla warfare. I paint my face and travel at night. You don't know it's over until you're in a body bag." In 1992 he told the *Los Angeles Times*: "It's like guerrilla warfare. If you reveal your location, all it does is allow your opponent to improve his artillery bearings. It's better to move quietly, with stealth, under cover of night."

Grisly stuff. But such stuff stands out, a decade later, because it runs against the grain of Reed's actual accomplishment. Namely, he *did* bring social and religious conservatives into the mainstream of the Republican party, and thus, in turn, into the mainstream of American politics. And he accomplished this, interestingly enough, by draining the Christian Coalition of much of its explicitly Christian, or even religious, content. Just look at the 1993 article Reed wrote for *Policy Review* entitled "Casting a Wider Net." In Reed's essay the Religious Right becomes the "pro-family" movement, for example—which movement, it seemed then to Reed, was "policy thin" and "value-laden." He wrote: "If the pro-family movement is not to suffer the same fate" as earlier conservative reform efforts, "the cluster of pro-family issues must now be expanded to attract a majority of voters."

He expanded this message in his book *After the Revolution*, first published in 1994 under the title *Politically Incorrect*:

> What we have in mind is not a Christian agenda or even a Republican agenda. It is not a special interest agenda of any kind. It is a pro-family agenda which restores autonomy to the two-parent family and provides sensible protections for this most basic and most essential unit of society.

And again:

> The American people need to know that we do not desire to exclude our political foes, only to gain our own place at the table. They cannot hear too often that our objective is not to dominate, but to participate, and that our vision of society includes protecting their right to speak and be heard as much as making our voices heard. We are not trying to elect Billy Graham to the presidency.

Looking back, the Christian Coalition seems a uniquely nineties institution. Reed, like other politicians of that decade, appropriated the language of civil rights to describe Christians—in other words, the vast majority of Americans—as "victims." Conservative Christians became, in Reedspeak, "people of faith" and "religious folk." Attacks on "people of faith" were "grounded not in fact" but "in fear and bigotry." "People of faith" had become caricatures, mere stereotypes in the popular culture; they had become, Reed wrote, the new "Amos and Andy."

Under Reed the Christian Coalition also embraced the multicultural politics that typified the 1990s. His "pro-family" movement embraced all denominations, all religions, all Americans. In 1995 he started the Catholic Alliance to recruit conservative Catholic voters. In 1995 he addressed the annual convention of the Anti-Defamation League and told the audience that Christians had not always been the best friends of the Jews. In 1996, in his book *Active Faith*, he suggested that social conservatives ought to seek compromise on the abortion issue. (Needless to say, controversy ensued.) In 1997 he started the Samaritan Project to reach out to black churches. He gave money to help to repair southern black churches destroyed by arsonists.

This wasn't the fire-and-brimstone politics of Jerry Falwell's defunct Moral Majority. This wasn't even the fire-and-brimstone politics of the Christian Coalition's founder, Pat Robertson. This was a hugely successful electoral strategy, however. In 1994 Reed told the *Washington Post* he had assembled a "data bank" of 1.3 million supporters. A year later he told *Time* magazine that the Coalition had 1.6 million "active supporters" and a $25 million budget. A year after that, Reed said the Coalition had 1.7 million names in its "data bank." Reed used the collection of tools he had learned organizing students in the 1980s to build a home in the Republican party for religious conservatives. The party, and American politics, were changed irrevocably.

Though the Coalition's membership reached its high point in 1996, the group's political apogee came, of course, in 1994, with the election of the Republican congressional majority. Reed began the year organizing a $1.4 million campaign to stop the Clinton health care plan; a year later, on May 15, 1995, he appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine. The cover line read: "The Right Hand of God." Reed was 33.

After the election in 1994, you may remember, Republicans promised a sea change in American life. They promised to "drain the swamp" in Washington, to rid politics of "special interests," to create, in the words of Rep. Jim Nussle, a "new order." Reed had a different interpretation of the election. "The 1994 election signaled our political arrival," he would later tell political reporters Dan Balz and Ronald Brownstein. "Now we have to institutionalize. [Our goal] is not to reach the voters and turn them out. We've already done that. Now we want to make ourselves permanent. . . . It's what the social historians call professionalization."

It made perfect sense, then, that in 1997 Reed would resign from the Christian Coalition and open up Century Strategies consulting. It was time, at long last, to "institutionalize." It was time, in other words, for what the social observers in Washington call "cashing in."

According to its website, *www.censtrat.com*, Century Strategies is "a full-service firm providing Strategic Business Development Assistance, Organizational Development, Direct Mail and Voter Contact Services, Fundraising Management, Research and Analysis, Creative Media Planning, Public and Media Relations, and List Management and Procurement." The firm has two offices—one in Atlanta and another in Washington—it has 10 employees, and it has, according to a spokeswoman, "around" two dozen clients. As "one of the nation's leading public affairs and public relations firms," i.e., not a lobbying firm, Century Strategies does not have to disclose its clients or its fees. But the names of some of those clients have surfaced over the years.

There's Enron, for example. The energy trading company was one of Century Strategies' first clients, in fact—it signed its first contract with Reed, for $114,000 plus expenses over 12 months, in September 1997. Century Strategies helped Enron push an energy deregulation plan through the Pennsylvania state legislature. Enron chose not to renew the contract in 1998. A few years later, on October 6, 2000, Enron signed another contract with Reed, this one for $75,000 plus expenses for six months.

In October 2000 Reed wrote a memo to Enron executives that gives us some clues to what a firm like his does. The memo first surfaced in the *Washington Post* in 2002. "In public policy it matters less who has the best arguments and more who gets heard—and by whom," Reed wrote. He promised his firm would make calls, collect voter lists, and place op-eds in influential newspapers—the sort of work any top-shelf lobbying firm performs on a daily basis. "I will assume personal responsibility for the overall vision and strategy of the project. I have long-term friendships with many members of Congress." Enron must have been pleased with Reed's work, because when the October 2000 contract expired, it signed Century Strategies to another, indefinite contract for $30,000 plus expenses per month. This arrangement lasted just a few months, however. Then Enron went bankrupt.

Enron wasn't Reed's only client, and Reed wasn't Enron's only lobbyist—er, "public affairs specialist." One of the unwritten rules of K Street—the row of office buildings in downtown Washington where lobbyists tend to roost—is that hiring only one firm isn't enough to pass your agenda. You have to employ several firms, donate to as many pols as possible, spread your largesse around to as many people as you can—provided they are the right people, of course. And since 1994 the right people have been . . . well, the Right people: Republicans. So Enron employed registered lobbyists, it donated to nonprofits allied with politicians and political causes, it gave money to political action committees, and it contracted firms such as Century Strategies to gin up "grassroots support" for utility deregulation. In its brief but dizzying existence Enron was an exemplar of the ways in which corporations pay lobbyists and legislators to manipulate public life for private gain.

The private gain in question does not have to be financial, of course. And it doesn't even have to be a corporation doing the paying. A few months after he started to work with Enron, Reed visited San Juan, Puerto Rico, where he gave a speech on Puerto Rican statehood. Reed was for it. "Let's let Puerto Ricans freely express their status preference," Reed told the audience at the local Chamber of

Commerce on February 9, 1998, "and if they choose, let's welcome them as the 51st state." Puerto Rican statehood would benefit Republicans: "We must demonstrate that our party is the natural home for millions of Americans of Hispanic heritage and the true representative of their ideals and values." A referendum would be to the benefit of self-government: "I think it is right to allow the people of Puerto Rico a voice and a vote on their future."

Reed's timing was auspicious. On March 5, 1998, a few weeks after he became an advocate of Puerto Rican statehood, the House passed—by a single vote—HR 856, the Puerto Rico Self-Determination Act, which established a timetable and referendum process by which Puerto Rico could become a state. According to the Associated Press, two days before the vote Reed issued a "report" that said "winning the Hispanic vote would be critical to maintaining congressional majorities," and that further said supporting Puerto Rican statehood would be key to winning the Hispanic vote.

At first blush the Puerto Rico bill, cosponsored by then-speaker of the House Newt Gingrich and then-majority whip Tom DeLay, came out of nowhere. But in fact it was the result of months of intense lobbying, of which Reed's advocacy was only a part. According to *Roll Call*, lobbying firms employed by pro-statehood interests had been paid over $2.3 million in the first half of 1997. One such firm was Preston Gates, and one such lobbyist was Jack Abramoff, who registered as a representative for the Future of Puerto Rico, Inc., in November 1997.

Because of the loophole in disclosure law, one can only infer that Century Strategies had taken on a pro-statehood interest as a client. It would make sense, given Reed's outspoken support for HR 856. And it would make sense, further, given that Reed's old friends Jack Abramoff and Grover Norquist shared his outspoken support. Norquist, like Reed, is no lobbyist; he is, instead, president of Americans for Tax Reform, a nonprofit group. But ATR, as it's called, does not restrict its activism to tax issues. On March 2, 1998, Peter Ferrara, general counsel for ATR, published an op-ed in the *Washington Times* in support of HR 856, which, he wrote, "simply requires us to face the Puerto Rico commonwealth anomaly and resolve it." Also, "it would free U.S. taxpayers from a growing $12 billion per year subsidy bill." (It's worth noting here that support for Puerto Rican statehood has been a longstanding GOP position.)

The Puerto Rico bill passed the House, but it ended up dying in the Senate—besides which, Puerto Rican voters rejected statehood in a December 1998 referendum anyway, making the whole exercise moot. But a host of lobbyists grew fat off the bill nonetheless.

More significant, however, the bill exposed a growing rift between Reed and other social conservatives, who were often at odds with Century Strategies' corporate clients. Phyllis Schlafly, for example, opposed Puerto Rican statehood, and cheered the bill's death in the Senate: "It looks as if it's a lot easier for big political money to buy Congress than it is to win the hearts of grassroots voters," she wrote in a January 1999 column.

The rift grew wider in 1999, when Reed took the Channel One television network as a client. Located in Los Angeles, Channel One is a for-profit television station that supplies schools with free audiovisual equipment, provided those schools broadcast the network's 12-minute news broadcast, which includes two minutes of commercials. Each day, about 8 million students in 12,000 secondary schools watch the broadcast. And it's a captive audience. Channel One promises its advertisers, who typically pay $200,000 for a 30-second spot, that students are not allowed to leave their seats—even to go to the bathroom—when the ads are onscreen.

Over the years Channel One drew criticism from lefty anticorporate types, who thought the network was a scam by profit-hungry advertisers to reach gullible, splurge-happy kids. But it also drew criticism from social conservatives, who complained that the network exposed impressionable young people to sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll. Kids are forced to watch advertising for junk food and Nike sneakers, went the thinking on the left. And kids are forced to watch interviews with Joycelyn Elders, and listen to music clips from Marilyn Manson, went the thinking on the right. Eyeing an opportunity for political triangulation, in April 1998 Alabama's Richard Shelby, who sat on the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions committee, called for hearings into the network.

But the hearings were delayed, primarily because Channel One launched a lavish and lucrative lobbying campaign to protect its interests. The progressive journalist Ruth Conniff estimates that by the time the actual hearings on Channel One occurred on May 20, 1999, the network had spent over $1 million in lobbying fees. In 1998, for example, Channel One paid its lobbying firm, Preston Gates, $120,000. In the first half of 1999, Channel One paid Preston Gates $820,000. In 2000 Channel One paid Preston Gates $380,000. The network's contact at the firm was Abramoff. Grover Norquist got into the mix, too, writing a *Washington Times* op-ed on January 30, 1999: "An independent news media outlet not controlled by liberals has seeped into the public schools," he wrote. "The liberals are trying to stop it."

But liberals were not the only people concerned about Channel One. So were social conservatives like Phyllis Schlafly and James Dobson. Schlafly even appeared before Shelby's committee alongside Ralph Nader. In the end,

however, the Senate hearings never amounted to much. Channel One still broadcasts. It still shows advertisements for junk food, and it still plays clips of Britney Spears. And all indications are that it still pays Century Strategies consulting fees. As recently as September 2002 Reed was making calls on behalf of Channel One to members of the Texas State Board of Education. How much those calls cost Channel One isn't known. Reed won't disclose it.

It's pretty easy to imagine, however, that Reed's clients, and the fees those clients pay him, will become a campaign issue as he runs for lieutenant governor. And it's pretty easy to imagine, further, that Reed's opponents will press him to release his client list, and to provide a forthright account of how his consulting business has shaped his thinking on public policy issues.

Policy issues such as China, for one. Social conservatives have a long and noble history of opposing Communist China's persecution of religious minorities. And Ralph Reed is a part of that history. Back in 1997, Reed went on the record with several reporters to share with them his concerns about granting China Most Favored Nation trading status. "This can't just be about profits and losses and dollars and cents," he said. "It has to be about matters of the heart and matters of the soul and America being a moral leader in the world." According to a Knight Ridder dispatch from May 15, 1997, Reed was "particularly concerned" about China's one-child, forced abortion policy and its "intolerance of Christianity."

Nowadays it's hard to get Reed to go on the record, which is a shame. Because it would be nice to have the opportunity to ask him about reporting done by *National Journal*'s Peter Stone. Stone recently reported in *Mother Jones* that in 2000, Boeing and the Business Roundtable hired Reed and Century Strategies to press for normalizing trade relations with China. According to Stone, Reed "helped write ads aimed at conservatives arguing that a closer economic relationship with China could improve human rights." In fact, a public relations executive, Brian Lunde, told Stone that Reed was "instrumental" in pushing through "permanent normal trade relations" with China in the spring of 2000. "Reed was horrible on China," one Republican foreign policy analyst told me last week. So: Between 1997 and 2000 something caused Ralph Reed to change his mind on China.

Not to put too fine a point on it, Reed's candidacy collapses whatever distinction remained between private interest and public office.

It's never a good sign when your local paper runs articles every other day connecting you to a scandal hundreds of miles away in Washington, D.C. And it's never a good sign when a prominent member of your own party goes out of his way to call you an "albatross" and "too divisive," as former Georgia House minority leader Bob Irvin did in the pages of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* last week. Reed's "M.O.," Irvin wrote,

> is to tell evangelical Christians that his cause of the moment, for which he has been hired, is their religious duty, and therefore they need to write regulators, turn up at meetings, or whatever. As an evangelical myself, I resent Christianity being used simply to help Reed's business.

Battle lines are being drawn, in other words. The same week that Irvin—who is, it should be noted, a longtime rival of Reed's—asked him to pull out of the race, a Democratic Alabama state representative, Randy Hinshaw, asked his state attorney general to open an investigation into an Abramoff-related anti-gambling campaign in which Reed played a part. At the same time, however, last Friday television personality Sean Hannity and former "Democratic" senator Zell Miller planned to fly to Georgia and endorse Reed in front of hundreds of supporters. The fight for Georgia lieutenant governor, when you think about it, increasingly recalls the 2000 Republican presidential primary fight, with an establishment candidate facing a pro-reform insurgent.

You see this insurgent mentality in the attacks the Cagle campaign has launched against Reed. You see, in miniature, the shape of the attacks Democrats will probably launch against Republicans in 2006. "Although Ralph Reed wants the public to believe he has no ties to the gambling industry," one of Cagle's flacks wrote in a recent press release, "his campaign continues to receive financial support from lobbyists representing everything from Indian casinos to horse racing tracks."

One day last week, I came across a passage from Reed's 1994 book, *Politically Incorrect*, that has rolled around in my head ever since. In the passage Reed talks about his disgust upon reaching the nation's capital:

> My experience in Washington was disillusioning. The lofty ideals that I brought to the nation's capital were shaken by the reality of life in Congress, where votes were sold to the highest bidder and politicians shook down special interests for campaign contributions in what journalist Brooks Jackson has called "honest graft." I saw powerful people up close, became acquainted with their foibles, and witnessed the seamy underside of politics. I learned quickly that the pursuit of power is an empty and unsatisfying exercise without a moral compass to guide one's journey.

Has Washington changed since then? Or has Ralph Reed? ♦

CORT FOR PRESIDENT 2008

Dr. Hugh Cort kicked off his campaign for the 2008 Republican Presidential nomination with a speech at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. on January 21, 2005, followed by questions from the press. Dr. Cort also autographed copies of his new book, ***Saddam's Attacks on America: 1993; September 11, 2001; and the Anthrax Attacks,*** that shows that Saddam funded and assisted Osama bin Laden in attacking America.

Dr. Cort's main purpose in running for President is to draw attention to the crucial need to immediately send 100,000 more troops to Iraq to secure and destroy the 10,000 ammo dumps Saddam set up, that to this day remain open and unguarded because we don't have enough troops to secure them, so that the terrorists cannot continually resupply with RPG's, mortars and explosive shells with which to make car bombs and IED's to blow up our troops and innocent Iraqis. Also, we need to guard the Iran and Syria borders to prevent a continuous influx of terrorists. If we do this, we can have Iraq truly stabilized in 3-6 months. We can get the 100,000 extra troops by mobilizing some of the 300,000 active duty U.S. soldiers doing desk jobs in the U.S., by having civilians do these desk jobs, thus freeing up the troops, which Don Rumsfeld suggested to Congress, but so far Congress has failed to act.

Dr. Cort also wants to draw attention to the crucial need to destroy Iran's nuclear facilities before it's too late. We should have bombed Iran's nuclear facilities in November or December 2004, before they were as dispersed. We can still bomb these sites, although now it will take multiple bombing strikes. If we let Iran get nuclear weapons, which will happen in August to November of 2005, Iran will eventually give nukes to terrorists who will blow up New York and Washington. Diplomacy does not work, as we have seen with North Korea, which now has 6 to 8 nukes. Iran has so much oil money they do not fear sanctions. If we don't act **now**, New York and Washington **will** be incinerated in nuclear blasts by terrorists.

Credentials: Dr. Hugh Cort is a psychiatrist who's spent years researching terrorism sources. He belongs to the Republican National Committee's President's Club, and the Republican Senatorial Inner Circle. He has been interviewed on over 70 radio stations across America. *Veteran's Vision* magazine invited Dr. Cort to speak at its monthly meeting in Washington D.C., where he shared the podium with the Pentagon's 3rd in command. Dr. Cort plans to run for President in the 2008 Republican primary to help spread his critical message. He wrote *SADDAM'S ATTACKS ON AMERICA: 1993; SEPTEMBER 11, 2001; and THE ANTHRAX ATTACKS: A Freewheeling and Hard-Hitting Commentary on the Life-Threatening Problems Facing America and the Prescription for Their Cure.*

CORT FOR PRESIDENT

www.cortforpresident.com

CORBIS

Stalin's Blindness

He deceived himself about Hitler, and it cost millions of Russian lives By Andrew Nagorski

What was Joseph Stalin thinking when he allied himself with Adolf Hitler for nearly two years at the beginning of World War II? What did Stalin know about Hitler's intentions to turn on him, and when did he know it?

Historians have grappled with these questions ever since foreign ministers Joachim von Ribbentrop and Vyacheslav Molotov signed the infamous Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact on August 23, 1939, and the subsequent German attack on the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941. Operation Barbarossa, as the German invasion was called, blindsided Stalin and came closer than most people realize to achieving its aim of inflicting a swift, mortal blow to his country. In *What Stalin Knew*, David E. Murphy, a former CIA agent who was in charge of Soviet operations, provides the most thorough answers to date. His systematic examination of the "product" of Soviet intelligence during the critical 22 months of the pact, and of how Stalin angrily rejected most of the reports of his spies, is an absorbing account on several levels—tactical, psychological, and moral. The result is a devastating indictment of the Soviet tyrant on all those grounds.

What Stalin Knew
The Enigma of Barbarossa
by David E. Murphy
Yale, 340 pp., $30

Stalin's apologists have always maintained that he had no choice but to agree to the pact with Hitler, since he needed to buy time to prepare for war. Britain and France's appeasement at Munich a year earlier, and their lack of serious interest in forging an alliance with Russia, left Stalin with no choice, they claimed. In fact, Murphy points out, the Soviet leader was much more than Hitler's reluctant partner. He was enthusiastic about dividing the spoils of Poland, which he attacked from the east 16 days after Hitler's armies attacked from the west, and seizing control of the Baltic states. And, most tellingly, he slipped quite comfortably into the role of defending Germany and vilifying the British and the French.

So comfortably that the case can be made that Stalin may have wondered what kind of outcome he really wanted from the war he helped unleash. In the

Andrew Nagorski, a senior editor at Newsweek International, *is writing a book about the battle for Moscow during World War II.*


CORBIS

most controversial part of his book, Murphy offers the first English translation of a speech Stalin allegedly made on August 19, 1939, right before formalizing his agreement with Hitler. In it, he argued that if the West defeated Germany in a long war, that country would be ripe for Sovietization; but if Germany won in a long war, it would be too exhausted to threaten the Soviet Union, and a Communist takeover would be likely in France. Hence a win-win situation for the Soviet Union, and his conclusion that "one must do everything to ensure that the war lasts as long as possible in order to exhaust both sides."

The speech was first reported by the French news agency Havas in late 1939, and Stalin promptly branded it a fabrication. But in his denial, he insisted "it was not Germany that attacked France and Britain but France and Britain that attacked Germany, thereby taking on themselves responsibility for the present war." Murphy is convinced that Stalin did make this speech; but even if he didn't, the Soviet leader's protests were almost as revealing as the contested transcript. Besides, Stalin let slip similar comments on September 7, 1939, in the presence of several of his top aides. Discussing the war "between two groups of capitalist countries," as he characterized the Western powers and Germany, he asserted: "We see nothing wrong in their having a good fight and weakening each other."

The problem was that Hitler, who had all along believed that subjugating Russia was a key part of his life's mission, quickly became frustrated with his inability to bomb Britain into submission or mount Operation Sea Lion, the invasion of that island nation. Instead, he convinced himself that if he knocked Russia out first, this would leave Britain more isolated and vulnerable than ever. The fact that history (to wit, Napoleon's disaster in 1812) and common sense flew in the face of that reasoning meant little to Hitler. But Stalin refused to believe it—as he refused to believe the steady stream of reports flowing from Soviet agents abroad.

Murphy provides details that prove "beyond any reasonable doubt," as he puts it, that the Soviet services filed alarming reports about German intentions early and often. From Berlin, a source code-named Ariets reported on September 29, 1940, that Hitler intended to "resolve problems in the east in the spring of next year." Maj. Gen. Vasily Tupikov, the Soviet military attaché in Berlin, backed up his source and later confirmed the redeployment of large numbers of German troops from the western to the eastern front. From Bucharest, the Soviet military mission reported on March 26, 1941: "The Romanian general staff has precise information that in two or three months Germany will attack the Ukraine. The Germans will attack the Baltic states at the same time . . ."

Stalin reacted by ridding himself of Ivan Proskurov, the head of military intelligence who had consistently refused to buckle to his pressure to deliver better news. His replacement, Filipp Golikov, began relying on reports from his officers who picked up German disinformation, which dismissed all talk of an invasion of Russia as "English propaganda." When Golikov felt obliged to pass along a report from his Prague station that the Germans would attack in the second half of June, it landed back on his desk with Stalin's note in red ink: "English provocation! Investigate!"

In keeping with that sentiment, Stalin was determined to honor his trade commitments with Germany, and his country provided huge amounts of oil, wood, copper, manganese ore, rubber, grain, and other resources to keep the German military machine well stocked. He seemed genuinely to believe that he could convince Hitler of his good intentions by such craven behavior. In the words of Nikita Khrushchev: "So while those sparrows were chirping, 'Look out for Hitler! Look out for Hitler!' Stalin was punctually sending the Germans trainload after trainload of grain and petroleum."

As Murphy spells out, Stalin also ignored reports directly from the border regions of large German troop concentrations, and ordered his soldiers not to open fire on German aircraft that were routinely violating Soviet airspace to stage brazen reconnaissance missions. On April 5, 1941, border troops received the order that, in the case of any confrontation, they should "strictly see to it that bullets do not fall on German territory." Instead of recognizing all the signs of German preparations for what they were, Stalin—convinced that he couldn't trust anyone, especially his spies who must have been doing someone else's bidding—closed himself off more and more, and refused to allow his generals to put their troops on a war footing. He was also happy to keep arresting anyone who questioned his policies, dispatching them to his legions of executioners and torturers.

Murphy's book should put to rest the myth that Stalin was a great tactician, the brilliant savior of his country. Before he saved it, he almost destroyed it, when he had every opportunity to prepare his troops for the worst and at least limit their losses. In the end, 27 million Soviet citizens perished during "The Great Patriotic War." Of those, there's no telling how many could have been saved if the country had been led by someone who was willing to listen to the "sparrows," and to renounce the use of terror against his own people—at least for the duration of their epic struggle. ♦

Gehry, Going, Gone

The Corcoran Gallery needs an addition, but not this one.

BY CATESBY LEIGH

What looks like a humiliating finale to the Corcoran Gallery of Art's quest for a new wing designed by Frank Gehry has shaken the museum, one of the nation's oldest, to its roots. It is once again wracked by the same sort of institutional self-doubt that afflicted it after it buckled under pressure from Congress and cancelled a Robert Mapplethorpe exhibition in 1989.

All the nagging questions the Mapplethorpe fiasco raised, questions which lingered during the 1990s, have resurfaced: How can an admission-charging, financially strapped gallery with an eclectic collection, carve out a bigger niche for itself in a city where the competition is so fierce? How can a museological pudding-without-a-theme define its identity, and make itself a prime Washington destination?

Corcoran director David C. Levy's solution to these problems was more or less this: Throw some celebrity architecture at them! Levy, who formerly headed the Parsons School of Design, and the New School for Social Research with which it merged, resigned last month as the Corcoran's board suspended its unsuccessful fundraising campaign for the Gehry wing. Now the board has to start from scratch. It should see this as an opportunity.

The Corcoran has a superb collection of American painting and sculpture, with distinguished works by John Singleton Copley, Benjamin West, Gilbert Stuart, Thomas Sully, Frederick Edwin Church, Thomas Cole, Hiram Powers, and Daniel Chester French. Thomas Eakins, Mary Cassatt, John Singer Sargent, George Bellows, and John Sloan also figure in the collection, which is qualitatively, if not quantitatively, weaker in postwar American art because the gallery's trustees were late in taking an interest in modernism.

The gallery is also home to some fine European works, thanks largely to a bequest from the Montana senator William A. Clark. The Clark bequest includes the Salon Doré, a truly magnificent French interior designed by the architect of the Arc de Triomphe. The Corcoran also boasts superb animal bronzes by Antoine-Louis Barye and a large photography collection. Less distinguished is the gallery's School of Art, a garden-variety postmodern redoubt not known, to put it mildly, for its rigor.

How to fully exploit these assets' potential, and secure a brighter future for a distinguished Washington institution? The first step is for the Corcoran to free itself of the conceptual straitjacket—the dysfunctional academic mentality—that led to the Gehry addition scheme. Gehry's design is an affront to the magnificence of the existing building. Completed in 1897, and designed by Ernest Flagg, the latter boasts heavily rusticated foundations of pink Massachusetts granite. The walls above are Georgia marble. The Flagg building brilliantly negotiates the oblique intersection of 17th Street and New York Avenue with a hemicycle enclosing an auditorium and a gallery above. Its elegant 17th Street façade is beautifully and intricately detailed, with an inventive, overscaled Doric frieze with squat columns conceived as triglyphs alternating with recessed metope-panels of Roman grillwork. Canova's couchant lions flank the impressive main entrance, and a griffin crowns each end of the long, handsome copper roof.

During the 1920s Charles A. Platt, architect of the Freer Gallery on the Mall, added an unassuming new wing fronting on E Street—the Corcoran's southern elevation—to accommodate the Clark bequest.

Gehry's revised addition design, which would double the Corcoran's size, includes three great folds of stainless steel billowing outward along New York Avenue. The folds at each end of the addition deliberately suggest raised skirts in the way they incline upward to accommodate entrances. The roof consists of another stainless-steel fold, an irregular conic section tilted upward toward the west, away from the original building. Here and there glazing is stashed crazily into gaps and slits, including the big gap for a new main entrance. Gargantuan sidewalk skylights over the art school's expanded underground facilities frame the path to this entrance.

It's true the Corcoran needs an addition. Some of its galleries have been requisitioned for administrative uses, and it can exhibit but a fraction of its collection at any one time. What's more, much of the existing building's frontage along New York Avenue consists of unappealing and essentially undesigned brick façades, along with a sunken parking lot. So in 1998 Levy got the *New Yorker* architecture critic Paul Goldberger to help him and a search committee identify the architect who could fill the Corcoran out with an eye-popping structure. They requested portfolios from 60 architects and additional designs from three finalists. To the surprise of absolutely no one, the gallery settled on Gehry, apotheosized after the 1997 opening of his Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain—the museum world's supreme example of architecture-driven success. A success Levy obviously wished to replicate.

With his engaging borscht-belt comedian persona, Gehry played Washington's arts establishment, ever bent on banishing the capital's philis-

Catesby Leigh is writing a book entitled Monumental America.

The ill-fated Gehry wing

Courtesy of the Corcoran Gallery of Art

tine image, like a violin. For mandarins like the late chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts, J. Carter Brown, Gehry's Corcoran wing couldn't come too soon. In the course of consultations among the commission, the gallery, and the architect, the competition design, which resembled flowing strands of tin foil, was substantially modified. The most significant change, in terms of its relationship to the original building, was that its top was scaled down in relation to Flagg's roof.

That's small beer relative to the problems of architectural appropriateness the Gehry project raises. This episode is a disturbing reminder that a monstrosity can get built in Washington's monumental core if it generates enough media buzz to deprive our mandarins of their precarious aesthetic bearings. But for some reversals of fortune—the dot-com bust, which cut into the donor base for the Gehry project, plus the heavy post-9/11 security around the White House, which the Corcoran says has contributed to a flat attendance rate and alienated potential supporters—Levy's dream might well have materialized.

The underlying, and all-too-widely, ignored problem here is that the academic orthodoxy that guides not just press coverage of projects like Gehry's, but also official review—whether by historic preservation boards, or city planning commissions, or design oversight entities like Fine Arts—is itself a dysfunctional modernist construct.

With regard to historic preservation, the Corcoran is a National Historic Landmark, and a District of Columbia landmark as well. The District's Historic Preservation Review Board reviewed the Gehry design, which took no account of the District's guidelines for additions to historic buildings, not to mention the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, on which those guidelines are based. Like the Standards, which were first issued during the Ford administration, the District's guidelines do not require that additions be stylistically consistent with the original building. In fact, they discourage it, lest additions (perish the thought!) be the object of unscientific confusion with the original building.

But the guidelines *do* stipulate "compatibility," or harmonious correspondence, between additions and original buildings in terms of the scale of their respective architectural elements, proportional relationships between the same, rhythm (or spacing of repetitive façade elements), massing, materials, color, and roof shape. On every count, the Gehry addition would have clashed with Flagg's building.

The District's 11-member Historic Preservation Review Board voted against the Gehry project, but not because of its incompatibility with the existing gallery. Rather, it opposed a demolition permit that would allow destruction of Platt's rotunda—a circular domed gallery—and the fine stairhall gallery adjacent to it. Mayor Anthony Williams overruled the board, citing an "exemplary architecture" clause in the city's historic preservation act. (As fundraising lagged, the District government even sweetened the pot to the tune of $40 million.) The Washington-based National Trust for Historic Preservation, by far the nation's most influential preservation organization, raised not a peep in protest.

The sad truth is that the preservation movement has been hijacked. For many—almost certainly, a large majority—of its rank-and-file supporters, historic preservation is supposed to spare us travesties like a histrionic modernist addition to a great classical landmark. But preservation has become a big movement with deep pockets. It needs an *apparat.* And that *apparat*, especially in the big cities, relies on the same academic construct the rest of our cultural establishment does.

This construct boils down to one word: history. Not history as a normative concept, but history as mere process. This concept of history, as the architecture historian Carroll William Westfall has noted, is the enemy of tradition. Tradition is about architectural continuities that span the ages, continuities conducive to the ennoblement of the public realm: human scale, arrangement of masses by analogy with the human body to create compositions rather than mere agglomerations, employment of a hierarchy of ornamental and decorative forms crowned by the human figure.

Yet instead of focusing on the historic continuities tradition has nurtured, the academic paradigm cuts the history of art into little fragments. This conceptual Balkanization led Levy to speak of the Flagg and Gehry structures as discrete *objets d'art*—period pieces—in the Corcoran's "collection," as if it would be lunacy (or, again, philistinism) to insist on any real formal consistency between the two.

The conventional understanding of architectural history has thus become a

function of particularized cultural contexts, each with its own religious, political, social, and technological characteristics. Like art history in general, it has been reduced to a pseudo-scientific stew in which aesthetic considerations are all too easily lost in a mass of historical or socio-psychological trivia.

This is the dysfunctional intellectual matrix from which Gehry's Corcoran project, like modernism's many other stylistic variants, springs. It is also the cause of the preservation bureaucracy's failure to oppose the Gehry design. That bureaucracy, no less than our leading architecture critics, would dismiss a sympathetic Corcoran addition as an exercise in "faking history." Architecture must be *authentic*! These are modern times, so we must be *modern*! Of course, "authenticity" and "modernity" are subjective notions, not to mention the "genius" so widely attributed to Frank Gehry.

Too bad the civic idealism, the enduring vision of the classical city, that inspired Flagg's design was lost on David Levy and the Corcoran's trustees. The fact remains that when (or if) the Corcoran gets its identity, its mission, and its financial situation sorted out, it will need to build an addition. To build an appropriate one, it needs to get past the current academic wisdom. And one barrier to the restoration of common sense is the fact that, back in the heady days of postmodernism—1987, to be exact—the Washington office of Hartman-Cox attempted to design a compatible Corcoran wing. But that addition would have been a speculative office building that would include some additional space for the museum. It was mainly intended to generate cash for the gallery's depleted coffers. Moreover, Hartman-Cox is a modernist office that went "eclectic" because of market demand. It's done some good work along the line, but it was not equal to designing a worthy Corcoran wing.

So, should a prospective big-time benefactor muster the common sense to say, "How about an architecturally harmonious addition?" you can bet he will be told, "We tried that." Or, "You won't get the Bilbao effect."

Maybe not. But should the Corcoran choose the right classical architect, it would get a new wing that would enhance Flagg's magnificent achievement rather than negate it. And there *are* architects equal to this brief: the Philadelphian John Blatteau comes to mind, as does the New York office of Fairfax and Sammons, also the London architect Julian Bicknell. What's more, the gallery would actually be ahead of the curve in the resurgence of classical civic art.

Such *glasnost* would also benefit the gallery's collection and the art school, separating the Corcoran from the postmodern herd. The collection, like the Corcoran's tiresome Biennial exhibitions (one is on display now), basically reflects the art-historical pieties that led to the Gehry addition project. The Corcoran should ditch the postmodern "anything-but-traditional" consensus, and start collecting work by the growing American school of painters and sculptors who are forging new links to the great tradition: artists like Edward Schmidt, Jacob Collins, Randy Melick, Leonard Porter, Brad Parker, and Will Wilson who, increasingly, are represented by leading commercial galleries in New York and elsewhere.

The Corcoran should *emphasize* its eclecticism and proudly proclaim itself an institution at the service of a pluralistic visual culture. The Corcoran School of Art need not be ideologically prescriptive—as it is now, insofar as its curriculum basically boils down to the "anything-but-tradition" routine. But it should distinguish itself not only by retaining classically oriented instructors in drawing and sculpture, but also by requiring students to study with them to acquire a demonstrable grasp of traditional principles of form and composition.

No doubt, the Corcoran can muddle along indefinitely. The alternative is to adopt a truly propitious identity, eschewing the reactionary taboos of America's institutionalized avant-garde and embracing a wide-ranging, truly pluralistic, postmodernism. ♦

BCA

Horseman, Pass By

A cowboy looks to the past and the future.

BY BILL CROKE

The American West of the 1940s was not much different from the West of the previous century. Rural electrification and telephone service were new or didn't yet exist. Roads were primitive, and working cowboys spent as much time in the saddle as in a pickup truck or on a tractor. Even a social trip to town on Saturday night was usually done "a-horseback." Dayton O. "Hawk" Hyde's picaresque memoir is full of methodical day-long, fifty-mile rides to round up stray cattle, court a woman, or do a favor for a friend. Hyde is the author of 18 books about the West, and is a noted photographer.

The Pastures of Beyond
An Old Cowboy Looks Back at the Old West
by Dayton O. Hyde
Arcade, 264 pp., $25

At 13, Hyde ran away from domineering Michigan parents and rode freight trains to his uncle Dayton "Buck" Williams's ranch, called "Yamsi," in the vast eastern Oregon desert country bordered by California and Nevada. At first, Uncle Buck didn't know what to do with the cocky youngster, but since family relations were strained, he let Dayton stay, and handed him over to his "waddies" (cowboys) to serve an arduous apprenticeship of hard work

Bill Croke is a writer in Cody, Wyoming.

Hawk Hyde at work

Arcade Publishing

and long days. In those days, huge cattle outfits such as the "MC" and the "ZX" (along with the "Yamsi") dominated the Great Basin ranch economy with spreads measuring not in deeded acres but deeded square miles, and with access to literally millions of acres of leased federal grazing land.

By the time the author was in his late teens, he was helping to drive herds long distances in all weathers, and expertly handling cattle and horses, spending as much of his life in the saddle as a character in a Cormac McCarthy novel. He captured and broke wild horses to replenish ranch stock, and in the summers, competed in local rodeos. More prosaic, he learned to irrigate pastures, and helped "get in" large amounts of hay each summer. These latter chores drove home the point that most of the work cowboys did was not romantic. For all its imparted joy in examining a way of life, there are no John Wayne-style Hollywood myths to be found in *The Pastures of Beyond*. Just a lot of brutal work.

World War II arrived, and Dayton was at first left behind because of his age. Uncle Buck lost most of his waddies to the military and, when he went south one winter, left Hawk to run the ranch and supervise the remaining collection of colorful transient (and sometimes alcoholic) elderly hands. Hyde's narrative is infectiously readable, thanks to his exposure to these loquacious Twain characters. He also cowboyed and rodeoed with Indians who came from nearby reservations, and was in awe of their skills, yet harbored no illusions about their lives, which tended to be nasty, brutish, and short. One comic but scary piece in the book recounts the cowboy singer Rex Allen entertaining a whiskey-fueled post-rodeo party "on the Res," where he sang and played to avoid being stabbed ("the big Indian stropped the edge of his hunting knife on his thigh").

Dayton soon had the opportunity to enlist in the Army Signal Corps, and was in the later waves of troops to hit the Normandy beaches. He served in General Patton's army as it stormed across France and fought in the Battle of the Bulge. Hyde's postwar service saw him participating in a USO-type rodeo put on for the troops—in the ancient Roman amphitheater in Arles, France, of all places.

Hawk's rodeo career took off after the war, as he competed around the West as a saddle bronc rider and rodeo clown, riding with such legends as Casey Tibbs, Ross Dollarhide, and Bud Linderman. Linderman was a man who enjoyed barroom brawls as much as getting tossed over a fence by a bucking bronc, and died young. There were also Slim Pickens and Montie Montana, two cowboys who later went on to western B-movie fame. (Pickens, of course, was the Wild West Air Force pilot in *Dr. Strangelove*.)

With these men, and many others, Hyde shared a camaraderie in a dangerous sport, where riding a wild bronc or bull offered someone a sensation akin to "dropping a matchstick on a spinning phonograph record."

Photography had become a hobby while Hyde was hanging around rodeo arenas, and by 1948, he was sending pictures to magazines. This earned him a contract with *Life* to contribute his offbeat, strangely angled photos, the result of his crazy *modus operandi* of lying in the dirt and catching the action closely while shooting up. Needless to say, this was exceedingly dangerous; but *Life*'s photo editors were ecstatic with the results, and a number of these photographs are included in the book. Nobody had ever before shot a "sunfishing" bronc—where the horse's four feet all simultaneously leave the ground—from below. And it could be argued that Slim Pickens's road to Hollywood, and his notorious ride on the hydrogen bomb, began in the viewfinder of Dayton Hyde's camera.

In the 1960s, writing surpassed photography as Hyde began to realize that the old ranch life was slipping over the horizon, and that he had witnessed its last glory days in his youth. He began to devote his winter downtime on the Oregon ranch to chronicling it, and his first book appeared in 1968. Hyde's 18 books on ranching—and its place in the natural world of the West (Hyde is an ardent conservationist)—are testament to a way of life that now almost doesn't exist, as Western ranches are increasingly either hobbyhorses for the rich (think Ted Turner) or subdivided into suburban sprawl.

Now approaching 80, this indefatigable cowboy pursues a passion for wild horse preservation at the nonprofit Black Hills Wild Horse Sanctuary in South Dakota, and cherishes that unique stoicism peculiar to the real American cowboy: "Nowadays, with a normal human life span, an old cowboy like me will have said good-bye to about three of his favorite saddle horses or about five of his favorite cowdogs," he writes. "One of the hardest things for a rodeo cowboy to accept is knowing that one day his body will give up. . . . Lord, be kind to this old cowboy. Don't send me to a land where there are no horses running wild and free, and no cattle to care for."

I don't think there's any danger of that. This is a wonderful memoir: half ranch, half rodeo, and all Dayton Hyde. A true waddie, one of the last of the breed. ♦

Lullaby of Broadway

The Tony awards are about marketing, not theater.

BY JOHN SIMON

The Tony awards, alas, are becoming less tony by the year. Meant to celebrate (however questionably) the best in Broadway theater, they are resorting to ever more desperate stratagems to, as they believe, tailor their TV show to higher ratings, i.e., peddle it to what used to be called the great unwashed when looking washed was still deemed desirable.

So how do we sell the Tonys? For the 2003/4 awards, one had Tony Bennett and Mary J. Blige to sing show tunes; there was also a duet for L.L. Cool J and Carol Channing. This time, for the 2004/5 awards, we got Aretha Franklin in squeaky-squawky duet with Hugh Jackman. All certifiable ways to kill a good song; the question is, does this really lure in the mass audience? And supposing it does, are those people going to fork over big bucks for a Broadway musical?

To beef up their importance, there seem now to be far more Tony categories—so many, that some, considered minor, were reduced to being shown on local public television (PBS) while the others got full network treatment on CBS (what a difference one letter makes!). Since nobody much watched the ones on PBS—for such things as best set, costume, and lighting design—PBS dropped them, and they were relegated to the Internet; in other words, miniaturized. Yet most of these awards involve great artistry, and deserve equal, unshrunken exposure. Conversely, the Drama Critics' Circle sticks chastely to three awards: best play, best foreign play, and best musical, and some years only two out of the three are considered worthy of an award.

How, exactly, are the Tonys arrived at? First, there is a committee of nominators, some 20-odd, or not so odd, of them, mostly connected to show business in some way, though there may be among them, for example, a retired judge of the New York Court of Claims, whose claim to participating may be unclear. Still, their pick of nominees is generally acceptable, save when a category has too few eligible candidates, and some unelectable clunkers must be thrown in to add up to at least three, although four or five are preferable.

Then come the voters: the boards of directors of the American Theatre Wing, Actors' Equity Association, the Dramatists Guild, the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, the United Scenic Artists, persons on the first- or second-night press list, and the entire membership of the League of American Theatres and Producers—some 650 voters altogether.

It should be clear to even the most conspicuously lay reader that such a lineup will include at least as much deadwood as brains and taste. I have often been accused of disrespect for my fellow critics, yet I would unequivocally put their choices ahead of that motley crew of 650, even though, by a mere shortfall of a couple of votes, they obtusely slighted *The Light in the Piazza*. But at least the Drama Critics' Circle avoided the error of the Tonys in enshrining *Monty Python's Spamalot*.

Let's face it: All awards are impugnable, even the most prestigious. Whether chosen by troglodytic Hollywoodsmen or hoary Swedish academicians, the laureates often enough succumb to the judgment of time. Read a list of Nobel Prize winners and you'll be amazed by the number of names without resonance, indeed defying recognition. Where in Stockholm the perceived need for geographic distribution ("How long since we gave one to a South American author?") colors the judgment, in Los Angeles the winners tend to come anointed by hype. As for the Tonys, the steady disgruntlement of those of us who rightly consider the ineligible Off Broadway shows easily as artistically valid as the exclusively eligible Broadway ones, casts a pall on the awards. Even at the Oscars, the little independents are allowed to compete with the big studio products.

It speaks volumes—or at least pamphlets—for the state of our culture that the most coveted, and of course most lucrative, Tony, the one that is climactically presented last, is the one for best musical rather than for drama. This year, it went to *Spamalot*, which had won in only two categories, rather than to *The Light in the Piazza*, which had won in six. The two for the former went to Mike Nichols, for best direction of a musical, and to Sara Ramirez, for best featured actress as the Lady of the Lake. Even if you don't feel, as I do, that Nichols's admittedly slick direction owed more to the director's quasi-legendary status in the public's eye, largely based on long-past work, and that the coarse and skimpily gifted Ramirez must have profited from P.C.'s bow to multiculturalism, you may still wonder why two awards should count for more than six.

Piazza won for music and lyrics (Adam Guettel), leading actress (Victoria Clark), sets (Michael Yeargan), costumes (Catherine Zuber), lighting (Christopher Akerlind), and, very importantly, orchestrations (Ted Sperling, Guettel, and Bruce Coughlin). To my mind, Bartlett Sher's cinematically panoramic direction of *Piazza*, which involved conveying the lives and atmospheres of two cities, Florence and Rome, required more invention than Nichols's typical jazzing-up of the traipsings of some parodic medieval knights. But of course, the influence of hard-core Monty Python fans—as, in other contexts, of Trekkies and Star

John Simon writes about theater for Bloomberg News.

Spamalot's Sara Ramirez

AP / Kathy Willens

Wars aficionados—must not be discounted, as I gathered from outbursts of laughter from many *Spamalot* spectators who memoriously howled at jokes well before the punch line.

One Tony strikes me as eminently just: the one for John Patrick Shanley's *Doubt* as best play, winning over its contrived and sensationalist chief rival, Martin McDonogh's *The Pillowman*. But how absurd is an award for best revival of a musical when none of the three the cat managed to drag in—*La Cage aux Folles* (which won), *Pacific Overtures*, or *Sweet Charity* (I'm speaking of productions here)—merited much of anything? The Nobels, in principle, can always pick deserving winners from the immense array of world writing; in the incomparably narrower field of Broadway theatricals, there may well be no winner in some category—a thing, however, with which neither the Tonys nor, perhaps, television viewers would be likely to put up.

We must not forget that the Tonys, even more than the Oscars, are in large measure a marketing ploy: something to attract the huge, extended TV audience to the Broadway bailiwick, regardless of how great a distance these potential theatergoers might have to travel. And that could easily sway a box office-oriented voter to rate a likely crowd-pleaser above a superior work, rightly or wrongly, considered elitist.

Another thing militates against correctly adjudged awards. This year, rather exceptionally, all nominees for best director of a play did outstanding work: John Crowley on *The Pillowman*, Scott Ellis on *Twelve Angry Men*, Joe Mantello on *Glengarry Glen Ross*, and Doug Hughes for *Doubt*. Arguably, any one of them might have won; I voted for the ultimate winner, Hughes, not (I hope) because *Doubt* happened to be the best play. But there is no doubt that quality of the vehicle influences the director's award. In a less level field, it would take an extremely savvy voter not to prefer more or less automatically the director of a halfway decent production of Shakespeare to a highly accomplished stager of a mere potboiler.

Finally, I must raise a further doubt. The award for best leading actor in a play went to Bill Irwin in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* That entire revival seemed misbegotten to me, what with, for instance, the much-lauded performance of Kathleen Turner as Martha striking me as vulgarly hammy. But Irwin, a mime rather than actor, who always seemed good to me only with mouth shut, was particularly out of place. His performance, featuring insecure vocalization, supererogatory gesticulation, and egregious lack of presence, nowise equaled that of any of his accomplished rivals: Philip Bosco, Billy Crudup, James Earl Jones, and Brian F. O'Byrne. A mime who actually memorizes that many lines, and somehow manages to get them out—someone, in other words, with the temerity to remake himself, however ineptly, as something new—promptly earns the misty-eyed accolade of a pack of underdog-boosters.

What are we to conclude from this, and similar, injustices? That the Tonys, already subject to creeping marginalization, may even end up extinct? Not really. In an imperfect world, even poorly adjudicated and garishly televised awards promoting that endangered species, theater, can be guardedly endorsed, and ought to find an audience. Whether this justifies them under the aspect of eternity is a rather different matter. But eternity is not for us to bestow; time will have to take care of that. ♦

"Hey! Don't leave me hanging. What happened to Goldilocks?"

Books in Brief

Over the Edge: How the Pursuit of Youth by Marketers and the Media Has Changed American Culture **by Leo Bogart (Ivan R. Dee, 323 pp., $27.50)** "Americans devote a substantial part of their waking hours swathed in a cocoon of make-believe," sociologist Leo Bogart writes in his new book, *Over the Edge*. Bogart is certainly not the first to complain that the modern media cocoon is peppered with sex and violence. But he does examine the last century's cultural shift in an inventive way.

Bogart argues that it is Madison Avenue marketers, not Hollywood, that are primarily responsible for the coarsening of popular culture, especially television. Marketers see young consumers as the elusive holy grail—if they can win their brand loyalty now, they'll have it forever. And sex and violence attract young viewers like nothing else. Filmmakers, for example, will sometimes insert language or sex into a movie to garner a tougher rating—no self-respecting teenager wants to be seen watching a PG film.

But Bogart makes a compelling case against such conventional wisdom. The young change their preferences just as much as anyone else. A new girlfriend may lead a man to choose a new deodorant; starting a family may lead him to change his carmaker. The young are more subject to short-term trends than anyone else.

Over the Edge is a sound analysis of the cultural changes marketing has wrought. And while the pervasiveness of quotation and the number of statistics scattered throughout the text can be mind-numbing at times, Bogart is engaging on the inner workings of television and its self-regulation. But he fails to offer any real solution to those, like himself, who care about what children see on their TV screens.

His main recommendation is ending the Federal Communications Commission's automatic renewal of licenses. But he also spends many pages explaining that research shows a complete lack of consensus among viewers about which material is suitable for what age group. Why government bureaucrats should make these difficult calls Bogart never explains.

—Kelly Jane Torrance

Spinoza's Theologico-Political Treatise **edited by Martin Yaffe (Focus, 480 pp., $24.95)** Anyone lacking Latin who is seriously interested in, among other things, the philosophical foundations of liberal democracy, the rise of the historical-critical approach to the Bible, and Leo Strauss owes Martin Yaffe a substantial debt of gratitude for his edition of Spinoza's *Theologico-Political Treatise*. Yaffe's edition of the *Treatise* far surpasses all its competitors in its faithfulness to Spinoza's peculiar manner of writing. It thus provides us fresh access to the late 17th-century work, which is at once "the philosophical founding document of both modern liberal democracy and modern biblical criticism."

Yaffe's excellent interpretive essay helps readers to see why Spinoza regarded his dual foundings—of liberal democracy and of a "critical" way of reading the Bible—as being inextricably linked. As for Yaffe's contribution to the study of Strauss, it consists not only of the way in which he follows Strauss's admonition to translators not to impose their own prejudices on a text, but also the way he keys his text to the Latin editions that Strauss employed in his great essay "How to Study Spinoza's *Theologico-Political Treatise*."

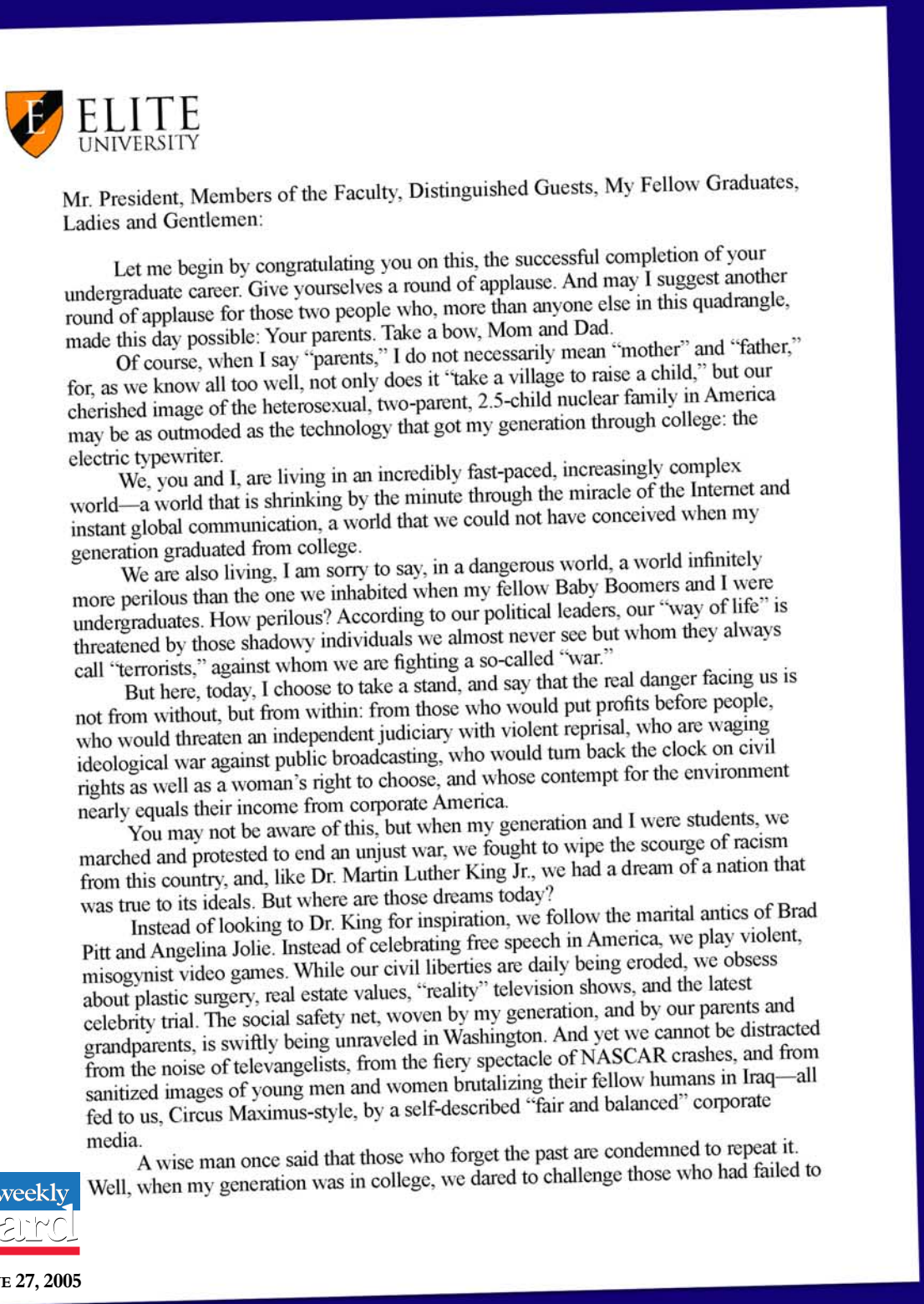
Yaffe thereby enables Latinless readers to investigate the hundreds of citations to the *Treatise* that Strauss provides throughout his essay. Because of his seriousness and because of his modesty—he does not confuse himself with a thinker of Spinoza's rank—Yaffe is a most able guide to Spinoza.

—Steven Lenzner

Parody

"The new racism that is seeping up across our land is wrapped up in new euphemisms, in budget technicalities, in judicial and criminal justice choices, in racial disparities in health, and in education."
—Marian Wright Edelman, Colgate University, May 15 commencement address

"The web of cooperation is under siege. A profound transformation is occurring in America as the balance between wealth and the commonwealth is threatened by that 'winner-take-all' ideology." **—Bill Moyers, City University of New York, May 26 commencement address**



ELITE
UNIVERSITY

Mr. President, Members of the Faculty, Distinguished Guests, My Fellow Graduates, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Let me begin by congratulating you on this, the successful completion of your undergraduate career. Give yourselves a round of applause. And may I suggest another round of applause for those two people who, more than anyone else in this quadrangle, made this day possible: Your parents. Take a bow, Mom and Dad.

Of course, when I say "parents," I do not necessarily mean "mother" and "father," for, as we know all too well, not only does it "take a village to raise a child," but our cherished image of the heterosexual, two-parent, 2.5-child nuclear family in America may be as outmoded as the technology that got my generation through college: the electric typewriter.

We, you and I, are living in an incredibly fast-paced, increasingly complex world—a world that is shrinking by the minute through the miracle of the Internet and instant global communication, a world that we could not have conceived when my generation graduated from college.

We are also living, I am sorry to say, in a dangerous world, a world infinitely more perilous than the one we inhabited when my fellow Baby Boomers and I were undergraduates. How perilous? According to our political leaders, our "way of life" is threatened by those shadowy individuals we almost never see but whom they always call "terrorists," against whom we are fighting a so-called "war."

But here, today, I choose to take a stand, and say that the real danger facing us is not from without, but from within: from those who would put profits before people, who would threaten an independent judiciary with violent reprisal, who are waging ideological war against public broadcasting, who would turn back the clock on civil rights as well as a woman's right to choose, and whose contempt for the environment nearly equals their income from corporate America.

You may not be aware of this, but when my generation and I were students, we marched and protested to end an unjust war, we fought to wipe the scourge of racism from this country, and, like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., we had a dream of a nation that was true to its ideals. But where are those dreams today?

Instead of looking to Dr. King for inspiration, we follow the marital antics of Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie. Instead of celebrating free speech in America, we play violent, misogynist video games. While our civil liberties are daily being eroded, we obsess about plastic surgery, real estate values, "reality" television shows, and the latest celebrity trial. The social safety net, woven by my generation, and by our parents and grandparents, is swiftly being unraveled in Washington. And yet we cannot be distracted from the noise of televangelists, from the fiery spectacle of NASCAR crashes, and from sanitized images of young men and women brutalizing their fellow humans in Iraq—all fed to us, Circus Maximus-style, by a self-described "fair and balanced" corporate media.

A wise man once said that those who forget the past are condemned to repeat it. Well, when my generation was in college, we dared to challenge those who had failed to

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