the weekly Standard

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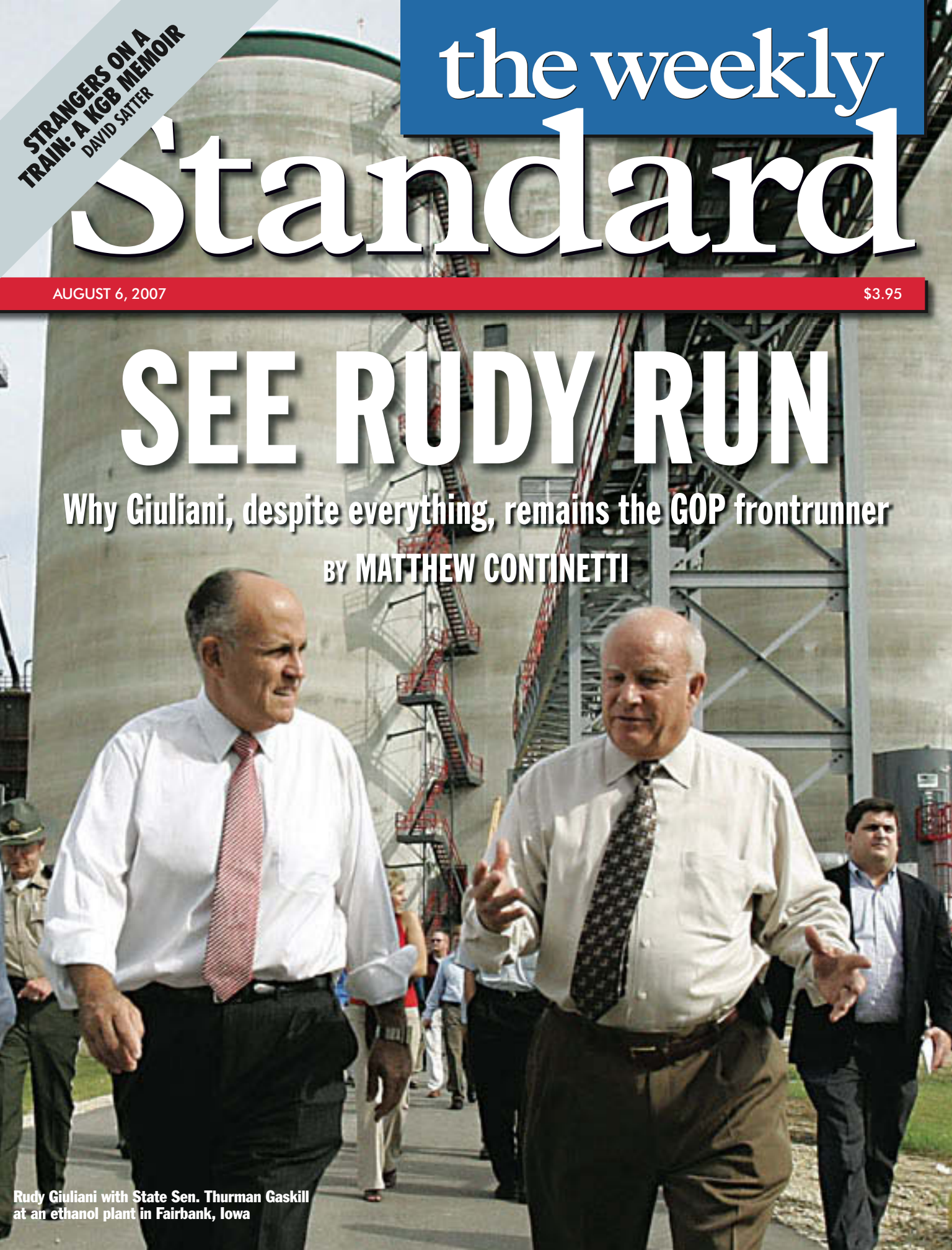
STRANGERS ON A TRAIN: A KGB MEMOIR
DAVID SATTER

SEE RUDY RUN

Why Giuliani, despite everything, remains the GOP frontrunner

BY MATTHEW CONTINETTI



Rudy Giuliani with State Sen. Thurman Gaskill at an ethanol plant in Fairbank, Iowa

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In the new issue of the Hoover Digest . . .

"Hybrid" Conservatives Are Learning to Adapt

Candidates who balance tradition and innovation are today's dominant species

Consider Rudy Giuliani—the thrice-married, twice-divorced, pro-choice, civil-union-supporting blue-state former mayor who appears to be the GOP front-runner—pacing even likely Democratic presidential challengers. Is conservatism about to remake itself by reclaiming the center of American politics? Or is it about to collapse from its internal contradictions?

Remember that all the leading conservative candidates are, in a sense, political hybrids, as is President Bush. They inherit Edmund Burke's respect for both liberty and tradition but also his awareness that preserving liberty requires "prudent innovation" amid the turbulence of political life. Modern conservatism embodies this built-in instability. Private versus government aid, the church-state balance, whether to try to spread democracy, how to handle social touchstones like abortion—candidates ponder a wide menu. How they choose will invigorate both American conservatism and the nation as a whole.

—Peter Berkowitz

Obesity Isn't a Public Health Crisis

Lots of Americans are overweight—but maybe that's their problem, not the government's

Does the growth in American obesity justify muscular government action? The problem with such a "public health crisis" approach—banning trans fats, slapping "sin" taxes on burgers—is that it blurs the line between conditions that harm others, and conditions that harm only those with the condition. An outbreak of tuberculosis is a public health emergency; an increase in back pain isn't.

If you focus on employer-sponsored health insurance, the most common kind in America, you find a surprising economic effect. Obese workers earn less per hour than their thinner colleagues—a finding that appears immune to differences in education, age, or training. Research suggests that the costs of pooled health insurance are actually being passed through to obese workers. If so, there is no social cost from their obesity and no public health crisis. Perhaps it's wise for the government to warn consumers to lay off sweets and exercise more, but any government intervention should be scrutinized for its own unintended, harmful side effects.

—Jay Bhattacharya

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Google has proposed rules for the upcoming 700 MHz auction that are nothing more than corporate welfare. Google wants to buy valuable spectrum on the cheap, sticking U.S. taxpayers with the tab while adding a few more billions to its bank account.

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STAND UP FOR STEEL

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the weekly Standard

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BPA INTERNATIONAL

The Clinton Cleavage Clamor

As everyone knows, The Scrapbook is a dedicated chronicler of the wayward press, and faithful student of journalistic tropes and tics.

Case in point: The curious habit of left-wing columnists—females, in particular—to name a prominent Republican senator when in need of a generic name for any icky older male. For a long time their favorite was Trent Lott—probably because he was for some years GOP leader, and from Mississippi, too—but other names get used in this singular way.

We thought of this last week when Ruth Marcus, a rookie columnist at the *Washington Post*, wrote a most peculiar essay in reaction to an earlier *Post* feature (by fashion editor Robin Givhan) that had analyzed the appearance of Hillary Clinton's décolletage on C-SPAN. (Yes, it was a front-page story.)

In defending Senator Clinton's choice of wardrobe, Marcus wrote the following: "If you're giving a speech on higher education, as Clinton was, you don't want Ted Stevens thinking about—and you certainly don't want to think about Ted Stevens thinking about—your cleavage."

Ted Stevens? So far as we are aware, the senior senator from Alaska is not famous for his leering comments, or roaming hands, or (since the name Clinton has come up) fooling around with interns. But he is 83 years old, and a Republican—and for Ruth Marcus, that's apparently enough.

Which is doubly mystifying, since there are, in fact, a handful of Senate personalities whose names would have been considerably more credible than Ted Stevens as creeps and lechers. But they're Democrats! Well, let's try it anyway: "If you're giving a speech on higher education, as Clinton was, you don't want Ted Kennedy thinking about—and you certainly don't want to think about Chris Dodd thinking about—your cleavage." ♦

Obama Watch

At last week's Democratic debate, a YouTube questioner asked Barack Obama whether he was "authentically black." Said Obama: "You know, when I'm catching a cab in Manhattan, in the past, I think I've given my credentials." It's a line Obama has used before, and the audience at the Citadel burst into applause at the candidate's caricature of New York City taxi drivers as racist.

When it comes to minorities and New York cabbies, however, things are a little more complicated than that. That's the lesson from Calvin Sims's October 15, 2006, *New York Times* article, "An Arm in the Air for that Cab Ride Home." Sims writes about a change he had been noticing: "In New York, it is much easier for me—a black male in my 40's—to get a cab." The experience of Sims's friends, it turns out, is similar. At first Sims speculates it may have something to do with getting older. But then he conducts some research that suggests a city program called "Operation Refusal" may be responsible. The program sends undercover policemen out to hail cabs. If the cabbies refuse to pick them up, they are fined. The compliance rate among cabbies in 2006, Sims says, was 96 percent. "It's a better climate today for everybody in the city to catch a taxi than it was back then, no matter what your race," New York City's taxi commissioner tells Sims. Maybe someone should tell Sen. Obama.

Oh, one more thing: The city began Operation Refusal in 1997. The mayor at the time? Rudy Giuliani. ♦

What (Acting) President Cheney Did

Dick Cheney was acting president for about two hours on Saturday July 21 (while the president underwent a medical procedure). To the surprise of Cheney haters everywhere, he didn't seize the opportunity to start a war, pardon Scooter Libby, or ship Carl Levin to Gitmo for questioning.

So what was Dick Cheney up to during the two hours of his acting presidency? Our colleague Stephen F. Hayes, author of a terrific new Cheney biography (*Cheney: The Untold Story of America's Most Powerful and Controversial Vice President*), tells us that the man caricatured in the mainstream media as Darth Vader stayed home and wrote a letter to his grandchildren.

"Dear Kate, Elizabeth, Grace, Philip, Richard and Sam," he began. "As I write this, our nation is engaged in a war with terrorists of global reach. My principal focus as Vice President has been to help protect the American people and our way of life. The vigilance, diligence and unwavering commitment of those who protect our Nation has kept us safe from terrorist attacks of the kind we faced on September 11, 2001. We owe a special debt of gratitude to the members of our armed forces, intelligence agencies, law enforcement agencies and others who serve and sacrifice to keep us safe and free."

The letter is written on Cheney's official letterhead and it closes with a personal request.

"As you grow, you will come to understand the sacrifices that each generation makes to preserve freedom and democracy for future generations, and you will assume the important responsibilities of citizens in our society. I

(Classic Steiner, reprinted from our issue of October 13, 1997)

ask of you as my grandchildren what I asked of my daughters, that you always strive in your lives to do what is right."

The letter is signed:

"May God bless and protect you.

Richard B. Cheney

Acting President of the United States

(Grandpa Cheney)" ♦

Old MacDonald, R.I.P.

Ilya Somin, a professor of law at George Mason University, dissented at the *volokh.com* blog from the "predictable outrage" that greeted the *Washington Post*'s July 23 exposé, "Deceased Farmers Got USDA Payments." Many of those payments, of course, effectively pay farmers not to grow crops.

The Scrapbook couldn't find any flaw in Somin's (tongue-in-cheek) case for paying dead farmers not to farm:

It's hard to deny that dead farmers can do just as good a job of not farming as living ones; perhaps even better! At the very least, paying the dead not to farm isn't *worse* than paying the living to do the same "job." However, there are three major reasons why it's actually likely to be better.

I. Lower Enforcement Costs.

When you pay living farmers not to farm, there are going to be enforcement costs. Those ungrateful peasants might be tempted to do some illicit farming on the side in order to make an extra buck or two. You may even have to file a lawsuit to get them to stop their nefarious black market farming. If you're really unlucky, the case might even go all the way to the Supreme Court, and then you're talking really big litigation expenses. By contrast, enforcement costs are rarely a problem when it comes to the dead.

II. Lower Deadweight Losses to Society.

When you pay living farmers not to farm, you deter them from engaging in productive activity that might benefit society as a whole. You reduce the production of food and raise the cost of living, especially for the poor. You don't have to worry about any of that when you pay the dead.

III. Less Rent-Seeking.

Once you start subsidizing the living, they will have strong incentives to lobby for ever larger subsidies and to reward politicians who hand them out, while punishing those who refuse. This activity increases deadweight losses by deterring ever-more productive activity, and also by diverting resources to the unproductive activity of lobbying and away from the socially useful purposes. Economists call this "rent dissipation." The good news: the vicious cycle of rent-seeking, lobbying, and rent dissipation is not a problem if subsidies for not farming are confined to the dead.

The Bottom Line.

I'd prefer that we abolish subsidies for not farming entirely. But if we have to have them, I hope as much of the money as possible goes to the dead.

The Scrapbook has its candidate for the next secretary of agriculture. ♦

Casual

Our Town

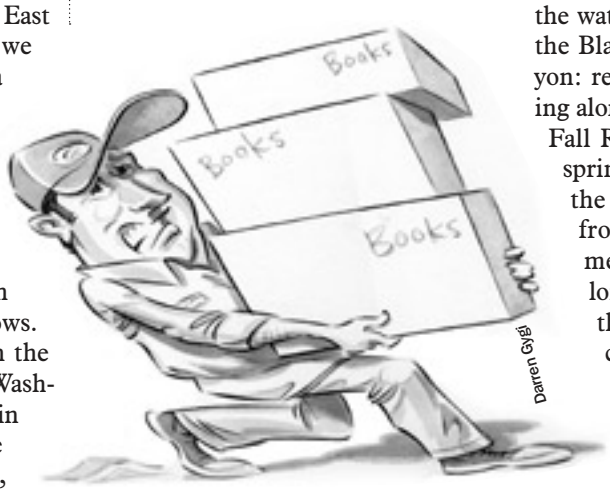
I can understand why somebody would want to live in Manhattan. And I can understand why somebody would want to live in Moscow, Idaho. It's all the places in between that remain a mystery. A great city excites your senses. A small town calms your nerves. A suburb eats your soul.

Or so I've always said. Which is why, after more than a dozen years of living in the great cities of the East Coast, my wife and I decided we would try calming our nerves a little with a summer place in a small South Dakota town.

In truth, part of it was the desire for permanent bookshelves. We've hauled our books—boxes and boxes and boxes of books—from Boston walk-ups to Baltimore bungalows. We've lugged them up and down the stairs of New York apartments, Washington townhouses, and back again to New York apartments. We've built bookcase after bookcase, only to abandon them like kindling all along the eastern seaboard. Three moves is as good as a fire for clearing out possessions, Benjamin Franklin once observed, but somehow the flames never touched the thousands of books. Is it too much, my wife asked midway through last year's move, to have a place where the books can just stay?

A home, in other words, instead of a dwelling. And the answer was obvious: Find a nice suburban house in New Jersey, say, and commute into Manhattan every day on the train. That's what any sane person would do, and so, instead, we got on an airplane, flew 1,500 miles to South Dakota, and bought an old Victorian house in the town of Hot Springs. A town, I should note, that was threatened, within days of our purchase, by wildfires in the surrounding countryside. I don't recall this as a problem faced much by the happy suburbanites in New Brunswick. Their books aren't usually at risk from forest fire.

Ah, well, most hatred of suburbia is really only a species of romanticism. I've constructed a long, political-science argument about why conservatives should favor cities and small towns over suburbs, but the subjective origin of the argument, I know, remains my own half-baked romantic visions of how wonderful it would be to live in Greenwich Village next door to Edna St. Vincent Millay or just a few houses down a tree-lined Emporia street from William Allen White.



South Dakota exists, for me, in the same kind of romantic fog. It's home: the place I grew up, the setting I left for the giant cityscapes back East. It's a world of small prairie towns and long empty highways. Of strange bare canyons in the Badlands and long alleys of dark trees in the Black Hills. No suburbs here: just a friendly place where everybody knows everybody else—where my family name is familiar, where my grandparents remain living memories.

I said as much in an op-ed about longing to come home, which I wrote for the *Rapid City Journal* as a way of announcing our arrival back in the state. I suppose I should have understood just how crazy my romantic vision of home had grown, when the newspaper misspelled my name in the byline—a typo that weakened, a little, the thesis of the piece, that the small towns of South Dakota are places where everyone is familiar with everyone else.

Still, even if no one knows us, South Dakota should make a nice escape from summers in New York. Hot Springs is an old resort town, built back in the days when people still went to mineral springs to "take the waters." On the southern edge of the Black Hills, it fills a narrow canyon: red sandstone buildings stretching along the banks of a stream called Fall River, warmed by the thermal springs bubbling up in town. And the house, too, will be a change from a tiny Manhattan apartment. It was, we were told, the longtime home of Leslie Jensen, the only governor of the state to come from Hot Springs and an interesting figure of the 1930s.

Do you get that kind of history in a suburb?

Actually, you probably do. The movers arrived from New York an hour ago, not particularly pleased with the prospect of hauling in all those books. The delivery drivers from the lumberyard are trying to get me to sign a receipt for the shelving they've unloaded on the front porch. The contractor is wandering through the house mumbling about crazy people who want bookcases put up on every wall. The man from the telephone company is trying to get the movers to move the books they just piled up against the wall he needs to reach. And the neighbors are all gathering across the street to watch the new circus that seems to have come to town.

The New Jersey suburbs are starting to look a lot more attractive.

Joseph Bottum

Alaska's Sweetheart

Living in Alaska, I heartily concur with Fred Barnes that Sarah Palin is Alaska's sweetheart ("The Most Popular Governor," July 16). Perhaps after America wakes up from the Hillary nightmare, Palin will become America's sweetheart, also. She is tough and transparent, but tender and disarmingly affectionate, too. We are very glad to have her in Juneau.

Joseph McDonald
Sitka, Alaska

A Glorious Debate

I enjoyed Gertrude Himmelfarb's review ("Glorious, Indeed," July 23) of Michael Barone's new book, *Our First Revolution*, in which he contends that Britain's "Glorious Revolution" of 1688 was the "founding event" of our own American Revolution. The parallels that Himmelfarb draws between Barone and Macaulay are interesting. Our history writing still suffers from a paucity of the sort of good narrative history that Macaulay was so good at, and Barone's book is welcome for that. Nevertheless, I was surprised that Himmelfarb made no mention of Bernard Bailyn's pioneering work, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (1967), which showed what a crucial dividing line Britain's "Glorious Revolution" became in the debates that eventually led to Lexington and Concord.

In his book, Bailyn points out that "pride in the liberty-preserving constitution of Britain was universal in the political literature of the age, and everyone agreed on the moral qualities necessary to preserve a free government. But where the mainstream purveyors of political thought spoke mainly with pride of the constitutional and political achievements of Georgian England, the opposition writers, no less proud of their heritage, viewed their circumstances with alarm, 'stressed the danger of England's ancient heritage and loss of pristine virtue,' studied the process of decay, and dwelt endlessly on the evidence of corruption they saw about them and the dark future these malignant signs portended. . . . Few of them accepted the Glorious Revolution and the lax political pragmatism that had followed as the final solution to the political problems of the time. They refused to believe that the transfer of sovereignty from the crown to Parliament provided a perfect guarantee that the individual would be protected from the powers of the state. . . . They insisted, at a time when government was felt to be less oppressive than it had been for two hundred years, that it was necessarily—by its very nature—hostile to human liberty and happiness; that, properly, it existed only on the tolerance of the people whose needs it served; and that it could be, and reasonably should be, dismissed—overthrown—if it attempted to exceed its proper jurisdiction."

Bailyn's contention that the American colonists didn't find the "Glorious Revolution" glorious enough (unlike, say, Burke) sounds persuasive to me, but I am looking forward to reading what Barone has to say in his book.

Edward Short
New York, N.Y.

Integration Blues

San Francisco's experience with socioeconomic integration calls into question Erin Sheley's optimism about this approach ("Down but Not Out," July 23). Despite taking into account language spoken at home, eligibility for free lunch, residence in public housing, academic performance, and reputation of former school, the policy has not resulted in racial integration. In fact, schools have become more racially segregated in many districts. We need to ask ourselves whether economic diversity is all that matters.

Walt Gardner
Los Angeles, Calif.

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Radio Free America

When Sen. Dick Durbin, Democrat of Illinois, talks about fairness, it's a good idea to count the silverware.

"It's time to reinstitute the Fairness Doctrine," says the assistant majority leader. "I have this old-fashioned attitude that when Americans hear both sides of the story, they're in a better position to make a decision."

Sounds attractive, we admit. What could be more American than fairness? Americans like to hear both sides of every story, and before making any decision, they like to hear the two fellows on either side of the fence make their pitch. What could be fairer than that? And now that the Democrats are back in charge of Congress, maybe the government ought to pass a bill making fairness the law of the land. Call it the Fairness Doctrine!

Well, to be fair, it's a little more complicated than that; and with respect to Dick Durbin, there's another side to his story.

To begin with, for five decades, there *was* a Fairness Doctrine—a Federal Communications Commission regulation, not an act of Congress. But in due course it came to be regarded as a relic of its time (1934) and, more important, an impediment to broadcasting as a public service. The Fairness Doctrine was repealed during the Reagan administration (1987); the courts have since upheld the repeal. And therein lies a tale.

When the FCC was established early in the New Deal, there was concern that the size limitations of the broadcasting band, and public ownership of the airwaves, would discourage discussion of public issues on the radio. So the FCC instituted the Fairness Doctrine, requiring stations to air both sides in debates; in 1949, the commission expanded the Doctrine, mandating stations to provide a specified amount of public-issue discussion in order to retain their license.

As often happens, this particular initiative had exactly the opposite effect from what the FCC intended. Over the years station owners grew so wary of attracting the scrutiny of federal regulators that they largely banned discussion of political issues on the air, and mandatory public service programming was deliberately anodyne.

All that changed once the FCC dropped the Fairness Doctrine in 1987. A half-century of pent-up free speech was suddenly liberated, and talk radio came into its own. Rush Limbaugh became a household name, paving the way for other entrepreneurs of the air, and radio went from being almost devoid of substantive content to a new, and unpredictable, factor in American politics.

By just about any measure, the Fairness Doctrine was an unfair impediment to free speech, and a public disservice in an open democracy. But it was something else as well: It was a federal regulation that had kept Rush Limbaugh—and Laura Ingraham and William Bennett and Sean Hannity and others—off the air. That is why Democrats have been seeking (in Dick Durbin's word) to "reinstitute" the Fairness Doctrine: It would require any station that carries Limbaugh to offer equal time to his critics.

Never mind the wisdom of the marketplace, or freedom of choice for radio listeners: Revival of the Fairness Doctrine is not intended to facilitate "both sides of the story" but to shut down conservative talk radio. Why? Because efforts to invent a successful left-wing Limbaugh have consistently failed, and what Jim Hightower, Mario Cuomo, and Al Franken's Air America cannot manage on the air might be accomplished by congressional action. This has been a forlorn cause of the left since the Fairness Doctrine was repealed 20 years ago; but now that Democrats control Congress, new life has been breathed into the effort. A Democratic president could appoint enough compliant commissioners to the FCC to accomplish the mission. Or Congress could act.

The threat is not idle. Left-wing activists are not especially enamored of free speech—especially when the open marketplace of ideas puts them at a political disadvantage. That is why the "netroots" are so agitated on this issue. And because Democrats, especially congressional Democrats, are in thrall to extremist elements within their party, senior members of Congress have been quick to embrace what amounts to official suppression of speech. Sen. John Kerry has endorsed the Fairness Doctrine, as has Sen. Dianne Feinstein, who welcomes a federal mandate "to present the other side" since (as she bluntly puts it) "unfortunately, talk radio is overwhelmingly one-way."

The problem, of course, is that the failure of liberal talk radio to compete successfully with conservative talk radio is an issue for liberals to ponder and solve. It is not a question to be settled by enactment of an ill-advised law, or revival of an arbitrary regulation, designed to suppress the First Amendment rights of political opponents.

—Philip Terzian, for the Editors

Mr. Brown Goes to Washington

The new prime minister will be cordially, but not warmly, welcomed. **BY IRWIN M. STELZER**

Gordon Brown bears no physical resemblance to the lanky Jimmy Stewart who starred in the 1939 film *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*. But when he makes his first trip to the United States as prime minister this week, Mr. Brown's hosts are not likely to find his version of naiveté any more endearing than the Washington establishment found Mr. Smith's.

Smith thought congressmen viewed their jobs as doing what was right for the country; he was quickly disabused of that idea. Brown thinks the Bush administration is unaffected when he caters to fellow Labourites by putting some "clear blue water" between himself and the president.

Diplomatic courtesy will prevent the Bush administration from disabusing the prime minister of that idea when he comes to Washington later this week. So he will wing home convinced that he has persuaded the president that the appointment of Mark Malloch Brown as Britain's representative to the U.N., Africa, and Asia and the recent unfriendly emissions from his cabinet colleagues are not intended to consign the special relationship to the dustbin of history. Malloch Brown will be a particular hurdle, though, since the White House is said to be still fuming over his participation in the campaign to prevent Senate confirmation of John Bolton as U.S. ambassador to the U.N.

The prime minister hopes to maintain this balancing act for the remaining 17 months of Bush's term—telling the Americans that he is true blue, while at the same time persuading the Brits that he has shaken loose from the old Bush-Blair relationship. By then he deems it likely that he will be interacting with a Democratic president, one less likely to have a foreign policy as aggressive in fighting terror as the neoconservative incumbent.

Not that Gordon Brown is soft on terrorism. After all, no sooner had he moved into No. 10 Downing Street than terrorists attempted to slaughter thousands in central London and at the Glasgow airport. Rather, it is that he firmly believes that the way to fight terrorism is to stimulate economic development in places such as Hamas-controlled Gaza, and in pursuit of that objective has sent his top colleague, Harvard-educated Ed Balls, on several trips to the Middle East in recent years. Show Gordon Brown a terrorist, and he will show you an unemployed young man yearning for a decent job.

Here is the state of play on the eve of the prime minister's visit. Brown's international development secretary, Douglas Alexander, the prime minister's closest associate with the exception of Balls, travels to America to tell the Council on Foreign Relations that Britain plans to "form new alliances," and that its foreign policy will emphasize multilateralism and "soft power," both of which America is supposed to oppose. The press was briefed by Alexander's staff in advance of the speech to make certain that reporters would notice how the language was chosen to distinguish Britain's approach to foreign affairs from America's. Alexander also warns that Britain will no longer measure nations' might by "what they could destroy," which will come as a surprise to those who remember that it was the destructive power of the American military that helped prevent Alexander from growing up a German-speaker.

The press in both countries, taking its cue from the briefings, interprets this as telling America that henceforth it is, at best, one among equals, and then only if it mends its ways. Brown, advised by friends that the press reports are doing him considerable damage in Washington, announces publicly that the *Times*, the *Guardian*, the *Sun*, and the *Telegraph*, among others, are misrepresenting Alexander's speech, and privately assures his friends that all of the political analysts have it wrong. As for Malloch Brown, the prime minister professes to have been unaware of the administration's very negative reaction to the former U.N. bureaucrat's anti-American rants back when he was defending Kofi Annan's corrupt administration of the Iraq Oil-for-Food program. But he says he needs Malloch Brown because of his African expertise, and passes the word that his namesake is to be confined to African matters: If he strays into other areas, he is gone.

At which point Malloch Brown, perhaps annoyed that America led the charge against U.N. corruption in the Iraq Oil-for-Food scandal, perhaps to prove that "Mark is Mark," as one probably delighted Foreign Office wag put it, decides to grant an interview to the *Telegraph*. He tells that newspaper that he is proud to be a neocon-hater; "I am happy to be described as an anti-neocon. If they see me as a villain, I will wear that as a badge of honor." Malloch Brown is too savvy an operator not to know that the president of the United States is counted among neocons when it comes to foreign policy. Or that he was straying far beyond the strict boundaries of the area assigned to him by the prime minister. But he is not fired, as his boss had promised, and retains his seats in the House of Lords and at the cabinet table.

Irwin M. Stelzer is a contributing editor to The Weekly Standard*, director of economic policy studies at the Hudson Institute, and a columnist for the* Sunday Times *(London).*

The prime minister then decides that he had better do something. British voters might be very annoyed with President Bush and America at the moment, but they don't want to see the White House welcome mat rolled up when their prime minister is in Washington. So he directs Foreign Secretary David Miliband to remind his cabinet colleagues that America remains Britain's most important ally. "It's very straightforward. Our commitment to work with the Americans in general and the Bush administration in particular is resolute," Miliband tells his colleagues and the media, setting the stage for the prime minister's visit with the president.

So now Gordon Brown is coming to Washington—but for a very quick visit since, he claims, he must hurry back to begin his family vacation. The implication of the prime minister's emphasis on his need for a quick turnaround is that even if asked to share the Colgate with the president at Camp David, as Tony Blair did on his first visit there, he must decline because of pressing obligations to his family. If you believe both that such an impromptu invitation is likely, and that it would be declined if extended, I have a bridge to sell you immediately after the next visit of the tooth fairy.

Don't misunderstand: Gordon Brown is a fan of America—but of its domestic economy. He admires American entrepreneurship; he prays that some day his countrymen will adopt the "everything is possible" attitude of Americans; he includes Bill Gates and Alan Greenspan in his pantheon of heroes. But he has been somewhere between noncommunicative and evasive when it comes to foreign policy.

I have little doubt that when he says to friends that he will stand with America in a crisis, his intentions are honorable. But I also have little doubt that he would think long and hard before overriding his cabinet colleagues, who will insist that any future deployment of British troops occur only with the approval of the U.N.—which Russia, China, or some other member of the Security Council would certainly veto. And remember: His new security supremo, Admiral Sir Alan West, former First Sea Lord and now sitting like Malloch Brown on the Labour benches in the House of Lords, praised British sailors for not resisting capture by the Iranians because to have done so would have triggered a war.

If Brown is as dedicated as he claims to be to the special relationship with America, his visit provides the perfect opportunity for him to make that clear to an American audience that is confused by the conflicting statements of Malloch Brown, who claims to be the wise-man adviser to David Miliband, and Miliband, his putative boss at the Foreign Office. My guess is that the prime minister is eager to make his pro-American views known, and to stamp his authority on his so-far fractious subordinates. Whether he will risk the fallout at home to do just that we will soon know.

Any student of history knows that there have been hiccups in the special relationship. If you doubt that, cast your eye over Sir Robin Renwick's *Fighting with Allies*, or recall the tension between our countries when Prime Minister Harold Wilson refused President Lyndon Johnson's request for British troops to support the Americans fighting in Vietnam. And John O'Sullivan, my colleague at the Hudson Institute, might prove right when he argues that the special relationship will survive temporary suspensions because it is rooted in a common culture, and in a system of mutual defense cooperation that "suit[s] both . . . countries very well."

Let's hope so. But one of Gordon Brown's priorities is to placate the Europeans, with whom he has been unpopular since he prevented Britain from trading in its pound sterling for the euro. He expects his popularity in the EU to soar when he signs on to their new constitution-disguised-as-treaty without honoring his pledge to put the matter to a referendum of the British people—a referendum that would undoubtedly result in the rejection of this further surrender of British sovereignty to Brussels. Surely, this courting of the EU suggests that in an EU-vs.-U.S. dispute, America cannot count on Gordon Brown. In which case, the White House switchboard might decide in the future to forward crisis calls from No. 10 Downing Street to the paper entity known as the European army.

But that is for later. Right now, there are enough areas of agreement to allow for an amicable meeting. Bush and Brown are determined to pressure the U.N. to take meaningful action to end the slaughter in Darfur; the prime minister will assure the president that he will not withdraw troops from Iraq without consulting with the Americans; he will also tell Bush that Britain will honor its commitment to help rid Afghanistan of the Taliban, and join America in calling for tighter sanctions on Iran. Both men will promise to do what they can to fight the rising tide of protectionism in America and in Europe. And, if they have a spare moment, they will exchange recommendations for summer reading.

Brown might suggest his own *Courage: Eight Portraits* to the president, with its reassuring message that "people who took brave decisions in the service of great causes . . . are for us exemplars and icons" or, if modesty forbids, two of his favorites: Gertrude Himmelfarb's *The Roads to Modernity*, with its emphasis on the intellectual contribution of many great Scots, and David Nasaw's biography of his model philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie, who used his great fortune to equalize educational opportunities. Bush might respond by suggesting that the prime minister would better understand the importance of the special relationship to the maintenance of world order were he to put Andrew Roberts's *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples Since 1900* atop his summer reading pile. Perhaps this shared passion for reading will prove more enduring than a shared preference for toothpaste. ♦

The Green Revolutionary

The Gates Foundation could learn a thing or two from Norman Borlaug. BY HENRY I. MILLER

On July 17, the Congressional Gold Medal (the nation's highest civilian award) was bestowed on Norman Borlaug, father of the Green Revolution that brought modern agricultural methods to much of the developing world. Borlaug's work, for which he won a Nobel Peace Prize in 1970, averted malnutrition, famine, and death for many millions.

As gratifying as it is to see Borlaug's great humanitarian achievement receive such well-deserved recognition, the sad fact is his ideas are under assault as never before. Barely a month before, former U.N. secretary general Kofi Annan was picked to head a new group that pledges to achieve a "green revolution" in Africa. Despite its name, though, the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa rejects proven and pivotal approaches to crop science. Alas, Annan's group is being handsomely bankrolled by Microsoft chairman Bill Gates's $30 billion foundation. If past performance is any indication, the only things likely to become greener are the numbered bank accounts of Kofi Annan and his cronies.

The contrast between Borlaug and Annan could hardly be greater. Borlaug is modest, earnest, and self-effacing, while Annan is arrogant and hubristic.

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Borlaug worked miracles of several kinds. First, he and his colleagues laboriously crossbred thousands of wheat varieties from around the world to produce some new ones with resistance to rust, a destructive plant pest.

Photo Credit / Art Credit

Norman Borlaug with his Congressional Gold Medal

This raised yields 20 to 40 percent. Second, in order to achieve maximum yields, he crafted so-called dwarf wheat varieties that, when aggressively fertilized, would not fall over in the field. Third, he devised an ingenious technique called "shuttle breeding"—growing two successive plantings each year, instead of the usual one, in different regions of Mexico. The availability of two test generations of wheat each year cut by half the time required for breeding new varieties. Moreover, because the two regions possessed distinctly different climatic conditions, the resulting varieties were broadly adapted to many latitudes, altitudes, and soil types. This wide adaptability, which flew in the face of agricultural orthodoxy, proved invaluable, and Mexican wheat yields skyrocketed. Similar successes followed when the Mexican wheat varieties were planted in Pakistan and India, but only after Borlaug convinced politicians in those countries to change national policies in order to provide the large amounts of fertilizer needed for wheat cultivation.

How successful were Borlaug's efforts? From 1950 to 1992, the world's grain output rose from 692 million tons produced on 1.7 billion acres of cropland to 1.9 billion tons on 1.73 billion acres of cropland—an extraordinary increase in yield of more than 150 percent. Without high-yield agriculture, either millions would have starved or increases in food output would have been realized only through huge increases in the acreage of land under cultivation—with losses of pristine wilderness far greater than all the losses to urban, suburban, and commercial expansion.

Borlaug's greatest achievement may have been overcoming what he called the "bureaucratic chaos, resistance from local seed breeders, and centuries of farmers' customs, habits, and superstitions," in order to get his innovations adopted.

Both the need for additional agricultural production and the obstacles to innovation remain, and in recent years, Borlaug has applied himself to ensuring the success of this century's equivalent of the Green Revolution: the application of gene-splicing, or "genetic modification," to agriculture. Products in development offer the possibility of even higher yields, lower inputs of agricultural chemicals and water, enhanced nutrition, and even plant-derived, orally active vaccines.

However, extremists in the environmental movement are doing everything they can to stop such progress, and their allies in national and United Nations-based regulatory agencies are more than eager to help. Borlaug sees history repeating itself:

> At the time [of the Green Revolution], Forrest Frank Hill, a Ford Foundation vice president, told me, "Enjoy this now, because nothing like it will ever happen to you again. Eventually the naysayers and the bureaucrats will choke you to death, and you won't be able to get permission for more of these efforts." Hill was right. His prediction anticipated the gene-splicing era that would arrive decades later. . . . The naysayers and bureaucrats have now come into their own. If our new varieties had been subjected to the kinds of regulatory strictures and requirements that are being inflicted upon the new biotechnology, they would *never* have become available [emphasis in original].

In his leadership of the U.N., Kofi Annan was precisely the kind of naysayer and bureaucrat feared by Borlaug and Hill. In the early days of Annan's new position with the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, established with an initial $150 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation, he left no doubt about his technophobic antagonism to modern crop science: "Africa should rely on African solutions—local labor, seeds, and markets—without seeking imported biotech 'magic bullets' or the promise of more open foreign markets." "We in the alliance will not incorporate [gene-spliced organisms] in our programs. We shall work with farmers using traditional seeds."

These statements are tantamount to suggesting that instead of modern vaccines and hygienic practices in Africa, witch doctors should cast spells to prevent infectious diseases. Genetically improved seeds can spell the difference between subsistence farmers being able to sell part of their harvest and their families dying of starvation. Annan is perpetrating a grotesque and potentially lethal fraud against African farmers.

Such technophobia should come as no surprise. During Annan's tenure, the U.N. conducted a virtual war on gene-splicing, and the results were catastrophic, especially for poor nations. Many U.N. agencies and programs—including the U.N. Environment Program, World Health Organization, Food and Agriculture Organization, and Convention on Biological Diversity—have been complicit in the unscientific, highly politicized, and excessive regulation of biotechnology, which has prevented critical advances in agricultural and pharmaceutical research and development. Biotechnology regulation is a growth industry at the U.N., one that regularly defies scientific consensus and common sense. The result is vastly inflated R&D costs, less innovation, and diminished exploitation of superior techniques and products—especially in poorer countries.

By any criteria, Kofi Annan's performance at the U.N. was execrable, and his own behavior deplorable. He presided over the Oil-for-Food debacle in Iraq, the cover-up of the investigation of the assassination of former Lebanese prime minister Rafik Hariri, diversion of dual-use technology (GPS equipment, a portable high-end spectrometer, and a large quantity of high-specification computer hardware) to North Korea, and inappropriate diversion of U.N. Development Program funds to the government of Burma. Corruption and malfeasance were business-as-usual for Annan's U.N. and made a mockery of U.N. attempts to alleviate poverty and enhance human rights.

During Annan's tenure, the U.N. waged war on the most precise, predictable, and effective techniques to advance agriculture. Judged by integrity, managerial competence, or acumen, Annan is eminently unqualified for his new position. Bill Gates might ask himself how he would feel if Annan tried to deny computers to Africans—and called instead for relying on tally sticks and other traditional calculating tools. Or how Africans would like it if Annan decreed that they should farm without tractors. Similar to resolving a glitch with Windows, the Gates Foundation should reboot—or, more precisely, give Kofi Annan the boot. And for its African agricultural initiative, it should seek a Norman Borlaug. ♦

Unwelcome Internet Guests

The problem of jihadist websites hosted in America. BY JONATHAN V. LAST

The website "Voice of the Oppressed," one of many extremist sites hosted on U.S. servers.

An ambitious private initiative to help American Internet service providers (ISPs) identify jihadist websites they are unwittingly hosting was unveiled the other day in Washington. The Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) will lend its translation capabilities and the expertise of its Islamist Website Monitor Project to any ISP that wants to investigate the content of a suspicious foreign-language site. MEMRI president Yigal Carmon expects that ISPs will voluntarily shut down extremist sites once the providers realize what inflammatory material the sites contain.

The goal is to significantly disrupt the jihadists' use of the Internet to spread their ideology, their explosives know-how, and their recruitment propaganda worldwide. It's a daunting task: The *Economist* reports that the number of terrorist websites has gone from "a handful in 2000 to several thousand today." What makes it doable, Carmon says, is the fact that the majority of extremist websites are hosted by ISPs in the United States.

Consider "Supporters of Jihad in Iraq" (*www.hussamaldin.jeeran.com*), a website whose headlined caption reads "Kill the Americans everywhere." It is hosted by Electric Lightwave, a subsidiary of Integra Telecom in Portland, Oregon. Or the website of Islamist sheikh Hamed al-Ali (*www.h-alali.net*), hosted by Fortress Integrated Technologies, in Irvine, California. Or the Al-Saha Forum (*www.alsaha.com*), which has posted videos from the media production arm of al Qaeda: It's hosted by Liquid Web Inc., in Lansing, Michigan.

If these and similar ISPs systematically eliminated sites with dangerous pro-terrorist content—just as they routinely purge sites with obscene content—al Qaeda and company would lose one of their most valuable weapons. "This is their air force, this is their unconventional weapon," says Carmon.

Some ISPs already have procedures in place to banish extremist sites. Google, which hosts more blogs than any provider in the world, requires its blogger clients to agree to a detailed Terms of Service waiver that prohibits both "hateful" and "violent" content.

In addition to their own standards of taste and civic responsibility, companies must be mindful of the fact that most extremist websites are hosted in violation of federal law. Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, for example, makes it illegal to provide support to designated terrorist groups, and Title 18, Section 842, of the U.S. Code makes it illegal to disseminate operational military information to terrorists.

Usually, the problem isn't that companies are unwilling to comply. It's that the websites are in Arabic or Farsi or other foreign languages. The ISPs don't realize who they're helping.

This is where MEMRI comes in. A privately funded nonprofit founded in 1998 to break down the language barrier between the Middle East and the West, the institute translates and posts on its website selections from the press, television, and websites of the region. It translates them into English, French, Italian, Hebrew, German, Spanish, and Japanese.

Three years ago, MEMRI published a study of Islamist websites, naming their hosts. Within a week, most of the ISPs had shut down the extremist sites—without any direct prodding from MEMRI. Now, to encourage more such voluntary action, MEMRI has made a standing offer: Any company concerned about a foreign-language site it is hosting can fill out a short form on MEMRI's website, and the think tank will—at no cost—translate the content, usually within a week.

On July 19, the day it announced this offer, MEMRI also released a new study of Islamist websites. Several of

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the American ISPs it names, contacted by a reporter, seemed happy to learn what was lurking on their servers. SiteGenie's Scott Litke acted swiftly to remove the World News Network (*www.w-n-n.net*), which was posting instructions on bomb making. "If someone tells me one of these sites has nasty stuff—it's gone," Litke said. "I don't even like sites talking bad about America."

Interserver, Inc., an ISP in Secaucus, New Jersey, quickly took down the website of Sheikh Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi (*www.alsunnah.info*), who was spiritual mentor to Abu Musab al Zarqawi, the late leader of Al Qaeda in Iraq, notorious for beheadings of foreign hostages and ferocious bombing attacks on civilians.

But not all companies are alert to the problem. A spokeswoman for ThePlanet, in Houston, said, "We don't police the content of our websites." Asked about the website they host for the group Palestinian Islamic Jihad—a State Department-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization—she claimed never to have heard of it and would say only, "We work with the authorities when sites are a credible threat or there is some kind of pending harm."

Even willing companies, however, are up against the fact that websites are portable. When the World News Network was kicked out by SiteGenie, it quickly found a new home with an ISP in Malaysia.

Yet it is a mistake to assume the Internet is untamable. Of the sites shut down after they were exposed in MEMRI's July 19 report, only one had managed to relocate as this story went to press eight days later. One of the reasons so many jihadists use American service providers is precisely that other governments have managed to keep them off their service providers. In May, Saudi Arabia passed a law mandating up to 10 years in jail for anyone setting up a website that promotes terrorist goals. China, too, has been quite successful at excluding content deemed objectionable by the regime.

The United States need not take such drastic governmental action. American businesses seem mostly eager to do the right thing, if not perfectly equipped to do so. The Holy Grail for these companies would be a database of individuals and websites associated with violent jihad. Whether maintained by a private or a public entity, such a watch list could help ISPs identify suspicious clients before accepting their business. Carmon likens the concept to a Better Business Bureau for the web or the "know your customer" regulations that the U.S. Treasury imposes on banks.

Such a database lies farther down the road. For now, MEMRI's translation service is an excellent start. ♦

The Justice Dept. Run Amok

The latest abuse of the Voting Rights Act.

BY EDWARD BLUM

Unlike its more upscale neighbors of Scarsdale and Larchmont, the village of Port Chester, New York (pop. 28,000), is a modest bedroom community in wealthy Westchester County, a 35-minute rail commute from midtown Manhattan. Since 1868, the village has been governed by a six-member board of trustees and a mayor, all of whom are elected at-large. In other words, the trustees don't run for election in separate districts, but rather represent all of the voters regardless of where they live. Because Port Chester is small—just 2.1 square miles—this system makes sense. At-large representation is the system used by most villages and hamlets in the state of New York.

But all that may change this year: The U.S. Department of Justice has decided it doesn't like the way Port Chester has conducted its elections for the last 139 years and has sued, claiming the current at-large voting violates the Voting Rights Act. The federal judge hearing the case a few months ago was so thoroughly persuaded by the federal government's arguments that he cancelled a forthcoming election and indicated he will soon rule against the village, compelling it to adopt a new system of government.

So, what changed after 14 decades to bring the government's wrath down on Port Chester? One thing unforeseen when the Voting Rights Act was passed in 1965: massive Hispanic immigration.

For all of the legislative twists and turns in the debate over the recent immigration bill, few on either side of the issue are discussing how legal immigrants are altering centuries-old forms of governance in dozens of towns, school districts, and other jurisdictions throughout the country. Forget for a moment the concern some have about illegal immigrants voting fraudulently. Whatever the number of elections affected by noncitizen voting fraud, it is dwarfed by the number of contests that have been affected legally by immigrants because of our nation's election laws. It's worth considering whether the law in this area needs to be revisited—and changed.

Port Chester's experience illustrates the problem. From 1990 to 2000, census data indicate the Hispanic population grew by 73 percent, making Hispanics a 46 percent plurality of the residents, with non-Hispanic whites at 43 percent and non-Hispanic blacks

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at nearly 7 percent. Demographic experts extrapolating from the recent trends estimate Hispanics are by now the majority.

Even if they are, though, no Hispanic has been elected to the board of trustees. Because of this, the Department of Justice alleges that Port Chester's Hispanic citizens are victims of voting discrimination because they have "less opportunity than white citizens to participate in the political process and to elect candidates of their choice." This allegedly violates Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act—one of the act's permanent provisions that apply to all jurisdictions coast to coast.

To remedy the alleged violation, the Department of Justice instructed Port Chester to scrap its at-large election of trustees and instead carve out six single-member voting districts, of which two to three must contain enough Hispanics to make it likely they will be able to "elect candidates of their choice"—in other words, one of their own.

Setting aside the implication that recent immigrants from Mexico and El Salvador bear the effects of historic American discrimination (to say nothing of their eligibility for affirmative action preferences in education, contracting, and employment), does current law really require the village of Port Chester to adopt a new system of representation simply because of a surge in the number of Hispanic immigrants? Well, based on 20-year-old case law, apparently so. Here's why.

The Justice Department's claims rely on *Thornburg* v. *Gingles*, a 1986 Supreme Court case which established a three-part test to determine if at-large and multimember voting methods violate the law. According to *Gingles*, single-member districts must be created when (1) the minority group is sufficiently large and geographically compact to constitute a majority in a single-member district; (2) the minority group votes as a cohesive bloc; and (3) the white majority votes as a bloc to defeat the minority group's preferred candidate. The judge in the Port Chester case found all three of these factors to be present, so he enjoined the village from holding elections until a full trial could take place. That trial ended a few weeks ago, and a decision is due shortly.

While each of the *Gingles* preconditions has serious flaws worthy of discussion, the first is the most troubling in this case because the Hispanic districts the Justice Department wants Port Chester to adopt have significant deviations in *citizen* population size from the non-Hispanic districts. For instance, one of the DOJ-proposed Hispanic districts has a 77.27 percent Hispanic voting-age population, but only a 56.27 percent *citizen* Hispanic voting-age population. Another proposed district has a 51.8 percent Hispanic voting-age population, but only a 28 percent *citizen* Hispanic voting-age population.

Does current law really require the village of Port Chester to adopt a new system of representation simply because of a surge in the number of Hispanic immigrants?

This isn't fair. It means that the Justice Department wants the village to have citizen-underpopulated Hispanic districts and citizen-overpopulated non-Hispanic ones. So, for example, a non-Hispanic district might be drawn with 5,000 persons of voting age, 95 percent of whom are citizens, to be represented by one Port Chester trustee. A Hispanic district, meanwhile, might have 5,000 persons, only 50 percent of whom are citizens. This would result in one village trustee representing 4,750 citizens, while another trustee represented only 2,500 citizens.

This kind of voting scheme violates the legal doctrine of one man, one vote established by the Supreme Court in the early 1960s. Jurisdictions in the Deep South tried similar shenanigans soon after the passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965 in an attempt to "dilute" the power of the black vote. The courts properly closed this and other loopholes. But the courts back then did not anticipate the effect of waves of noncitizen Hispanic immigration. This inequity goes to the heart of the Equal Protection clause of the Constitution.

So, here's the legal question in Port Chester that needs resolution: Does undersizing the citizen population in the Hispanic voting districts dilute the strength of the voters in non-Hispanic districts? In other words, should 2,500 citizens in one district get one representative, while in a neighboring district, it takes 4,750 people to get one?

The Supreme Court has long held that other than for a state's congressional districts, population deviations between voting districts cannot be greater than 10 percent. Yet, the Court has never defined a critical variable in this equation, namely, what is the relevant "population"?

It is a question that has bedeviled the lower courts. The Fifth Circuit has held that it is "a choice left to the political process" which population to count. The Fourth Circuit similarly held that courts have no business getting into this essentially "political" question. The Ninth Circuit, in contrast, has held that using citizen voting-age population instead of total voting-age population in these contexts would violate the Constitution.

This question needs resolution, either from the courts or, better, from Congress. While the immigration bill appears dead for now, these issues still need to be fixed. And what better way than legislation? After all, how many members of Congress believe U.S. citizens should have their votes for any elective office "diluted" because legal and illegal noncitizens are counted for the purposes of constructing single-member districts?

It's a good question. The people of Port Chester and elsewhere need to find out. ♦

See Rudy Run

Why Giuliani, despite everything, remains the Republican frontrunner

By Matthew Continetti

Sioux City, Iowa

Rudolph W. Giuliani, the former mayor of New York City and candidate for the Republican presidential nomination, is wandering around a junior high school computer lab, smiling like a child. It's the early evening of July 18, and this is Giuliani's fourth campaign stop of the day. In a half hour or so he will take questions from audience members in the school's gymnasium. But right now he is pointing out and reading aloud the signs above the different computers in the lab, which say things like "Dam Control" . . . "Electrical Grid" . . . "Water Supply". . . .

"You know what this is like?" he says. "This is just like . . . a . . . an emergency response center!"

The glee with which Giuliani says this, the joy he clearly takes at being in a room that reminds him of places where he can be in charge, barking orders and leading others, helps explain his appeal as a presidential candidate. It's an appeal that many in the press and in elite Republican circles seem not to have recognized. The conventional wisdom holds that as grassroots conservatives wake up to Giuliani's differences with them on issues like abortion, they will ditch him in favor of someone else. That may be happening to some extent, but it hasn't knocked Giuliani out of first place or undermined the rationale for his candidacy. Despite his variance on some issues with some conservatives, a decline in national public opinion polls since early March, and a recent spate of harsh media coverage, Giuliani remains the frontrunner for the 2008 Republican nomination. He continues to lead in national polls and in many state polls. He's winning the money race. And he's preparing for the inevitable counterattack.

Nothing is guaranteed in politics, of course. And there's no question Giuliani's decline has been real. Charles Franklin, a political scientist and polling expert at the University of Wisconsin, estimates that the mayor's support has fallen around 8 percentage points nationally since March. The trend in support for Giuliani in Iowa and New Hampshire is also downward. So far, Sen. John McCain's estimated 10 percentage point decline nationally, and the hemorrhaging of cash and staff from his campaign, has overshadowed Giuliani's downward trend. But the trend is there.

A combination of factors may have contributed to Giuliani's decline. His aides say the drop in poll numbers is a fall from an "unnatural high," the inevitable result of a competitive, four-way primary between Giuliani, former Tennessee senator Fred Thompson, former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney, and McCain. The aides go on to say Giuliani has not yet fully engaged in the campaign, whether through personal retail politics, television and radio advertising, or direct mail. Giuliani has visited Iowa only six times since entering the race. What made this most recent Iowa trip so unusual was that Giuliani held nine events over two days. In the past he has limited public appearances to one or two a day. For now, Giuliani's main concern remains fundraising. Compared with McCain and Romney, Giuliani has spent relatively little money. He has not aired a single television ad. "Romney had $8 million in the bank before we had telephones," says Jim Dyke, one of Giuliani's senior communications advisers.

Giuliani has received more than his share of negative publicity. So far this summer he has lost his South Carolina campaign chairman to a criminal indictment, faced questions over his relationship with the Iraq Study Group, and seen a key southern ally, Louisiana senator David Vitter, admit to hiring a prostitute. Democrats and their affiliates have attacked him for actions he took (or failed to take) before and after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Press releases from the Democratic National Committee have criticized his "failing leadership as mayor," his "divisive leadership," his law firm's lobbying activities, and much else. And all of this is just the beginning. The attacks on Giuliani's business interests, former associates, and operatic personal life will mount as 2008 approaches.

For the moment, however, it seems Giuliani has weathered the storm. Last week's *Washington Post*/ABC News poll of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents had him running more than 20 points ahead of either McCain or Thompson. In the Gallup poll, after reaching a

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AP / Charlie Neibergall

Giuliani at Morg's Diner in Waterloo, Iowa, July 19, 2007

low of 28 percent support in early June (while still leading the field), the mayor appears to have stabilized at 30 percent. The surveys bolster the Giuliani campaign's contention that his decline has halted. "By any polling standard," Charles Franklin wrote in a July 24 email, Giuliani "is, as of today, the clear frontrunner. He has led McCain in 96 of 108 national polls, led Romney in 104 of 104, and led Thompson in 46 of 47."

Even as his poll numbers dropped, Giuliani's financial position strengthened. He dominated the headlines surrounding the close of the second fundraising quarter on June 30. He raised more money from individual contributors than any other Republican candidate in the second quarter. He was the only Republican to improve his fundraising from the first to the second quarter. He has the greatest amount of cash on hand, and his campaign has zero debt.

Giuliani's organization has also improved. An aide says the campaign is now focused on publicizing the mayor's hiring of staff and gathering of supporters, while also trying not to exhaust the candidate or those who work for him. Over the last few weeks the campaign has announced new hires in Illinois, New Hampshire, California, and South Carolina. It has announced new endorsements in Iowa, Florida, California, Georgia, and South Carolina. It has released its first radio advertisements in Iowa and New Hampshire. It has rolled out a foreign policy advisory board and a justice advisory committee. The mayor gives more interviews than he has in the past, and his staff is more responsive to the press. And Giuliani is starting to show up at events on time. "He's not as late as he once was," says historian Fred Siegel, author of *The Prince of the City*, a book about Giuliani. "Staff-wise, organization-wise, it's beginning to meld."

None of this matters unless there is a substantive reason for Giuliani's candidacy. The mayor provides 12. He has spent the summer talking about his "12 Commitments to the American People," a collection of policy pledges that he keeps on a small card in his coat pocket. So far Giuliani has added details to four of his commitments: promoting fiscal discipline in government, increasing America's competitiveness in the global economy, appointing strict constructionist judges and enacting tort reform, and moving America toward energy independence. This week, the campaign plans to roll out Giuliani's commitment to reform health care.

Support for Giuliani boils down to two things. The first is determination to stop Hillary Clinton from becoming president. Polls show Giuliani is the most competitive candidate against Clinton in a general election. The mayor contrasts himself with Clinton and other Democrats at every opportunity. Michael DuHaime, Giuliani's campaign manager, has said nominating hizzoner would put states such as New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, California, Connecticut, Washington, and Oregon in play for Republicans for the first time in years.

Republicans respond to this argument. Last week's *Washington Post*/ABC News poll found that nearly half of the Republicans and Republican-leaning independents surveyed thought Giuliani is the candidate with the best chance of winning in 2008. A recent Gallup poll found that 74 percent of Republicans surveyed said Giuliani would be an acceptable GOP presidential nominee. Among self-described "born again or evangelical" Christian Republicans, 69 percent said Giuliani would be acceptable. Leaving a restaurant in Le Mars, Iowa, after Giuliani had spent an hour taking questions, I overheard one man enthusiastically say to another, "How'd you like to see *him* debate Hillary!"

Then there is the war. It is clearly the most important

issue for Republicans today, and it is the issue that engages Giuliani the most. While he leaves considerable room for maneuver on Iraq policy, Giuliani sees the war in Iraq as part of a larger struggle against jihadism. It is a struggle he wants to lead, and one about which he has thought a great deal. Giuliani says he first became interested in Islamic terrorism in the mid-1970s, as an attorney in the Ford Justice Department. While he was mayor of New York, his police department worked on many counterterrorism investigations. Then came 9/11, and Giuliani's elevation in the American psyche to national hero.

When audiences question Giuliani, they tend to ask him about the war and what he would do to prosecute it. In the day I spent following Giuliani across western Iowa, during which the mayor spoke to hundreds of people, exactly two audience members asked him questions dealing with social issues. One man wanted to know about Giuliani's "family, faith, and politics." One woman wanted to know the mayor's stance on gay rights. And that was all. It may be that the audiences who go see Giuliani are self-selected—that is, those voters who would ask social-issues questions know how he differs from them, and so don't bother to go at all. It also may be that the Republican party is undergoing a genuine realignment in priorities.

The rap on Giuliani is that his candidacy is based entirely on his leadership during September 11, 2001, and the days that followed. The truth is that Giuliani rarely mentions 9/11 on the stump. He speaks of it allusively or as part of a list of terrorist attacks against the United States and U.S. interests stretching back three decades. He seems more interested in preventing future attacks than in reminiscing about past terrorist successes.

"The terrorists pose different challenges for us," Giuliani told me. "Terrorists are not armed combatants. A group of people who came back from Iraq about two months ago said to me, 'You know, we'd have this over with in three months if they wore uniforms.' Well, they don't wear uniforms. And therefore, it makes sense to me that they wouldn't get the same benefits that you would get if you were waging war under the banner of a nation-state, a flag, a signatory to the Geneva conventions."

The debate over "torture" illustrates these new challenges. "I don't think America should torture anybody," Giuliani said, "for moral reasons and humanitarian reasons. But when I hear senators say to me, 'If we torture them, they'll torture us,' I think they just miss the point completely. We shouldn't torture because it's wrong. But if we think we're getting any break for that, we're absolutely

not aware enough of the enemy we're facing."

Giuliani says many Democrats, and some Republicans, ignore the peculiar issues jihadism poses to the United States. "I don't think they understand Islamic terrorism," Giuliani said. "I really don't. I don't think they have suspended all the prejudgments that you have because you've looked at the world in a certain way for so much of your life, then stepped back from it and said, 'Do these people fit into this way of thinking, this category that we have?' The answer is they don't. It's a different set of things that we have to think about in how to affect them and how to deal with them."

A different set. . . . Giuliani's candidacy isn't about 9/11. It's about American politics in the aftermath of 9/11. And just as the war on terror brings forth new strategies of statecraft and warcraft, Giuliani thinks it will also bring forth a new type of Republican presidential candidate—him—and perhaps a new, or at least different, Republican party.

Giuliani doesn't talk about a new GOP. Indeed, he and his campaign go to great lengths to emphasize his similarities with the conservatives who make up the single largest Republican voting bloc. His policy initiatives and public statements are designed to assuage conservatives. He says he would not attempt to rewrite the Republican platform. Still, a Giuliani candidacy would alter the Republican party. For one, it would de-link the Republican presidential nominee from opposition to *Roe* v. *Wade* for the first time in decades. And it would divorce the Republican presidential nominee from much of the conservative movement for the first time since 2000.

This would be a considerable transformation. Pro-life voters compose a significant portion of the GOP's volunteer corps. There's a chance that they will sit out 2008 if the Republican candidate doesn't share their views on abortion. If that happened, writes the Republican political operative Soren Dayton, "the GOP, out of necessity, would need to recruit a whole new set of volunteers," shattering "the grip that social conservative activists have on the grassroots of the party." There's also a chance that fears of a Clinton restoration and the overall importance of the war on jihadism will subsume party differences over abortion. The conservative grassroots will remain more or less intact. But what if that's not the case?

A lot depends on what Giuliani would do if he became the nominee. It seems clear he understands the difference between representing 8 million New Yorkers and serving as head of state and head of government for 300 million Americans. "When you take on different responsibilities," Giuliani told me, "you kind of have to think more broadly. And some of the things that were good for your individual constituency maybe aren't good for your overall constituency."

Many people, including most of his competitors for the Republican nomination, don't seem to have thought through the consequences of Giuliani's ascendance. They haven't arrived at a compelling argument for why his candidacy would be harmful. The only candidate really to go after Giuliani in the Republican debates was former Virginia governor Jim Gilmore, and he recently dropped out of the race. Romney spends most of his time attacking McCain, and Kansas senator Sam Brownback spends most of his time attacking Romney.

It could be that most Republican elites assume the prospect of a Giuliani nomination to be so unlikely that they act as if he were not in the race at all. Last week the Romney campaign spent considerable effort attempting to convince the political press that the former Massachusetts governor, not Giuliani, was the "actual" presidential frontrunner. The argument wasn't convincing. To date, the most prominent attack on Giuliani hasn't come from any of his fellow GOP candidates. It's come from a former Bush speechwriter turned *Washington Post* columnist, Michael Gerson, who argued in a recent column that Giuliani is a "Nixon Republican."

One candidate seems ready to challenge Giuliani head-on. But he has not officially entered the race and will not take part in any televised debates until September at the earliest. The day after the Democratic-leaning International Association of Firefighters launched an attack on Giuliani, Fred Thompson met with the head of another anti-Giuliani firefighter union in New York City. Thompson exchanged pleasantries with the union boss and discussed counterterrorism and first responders. It was a signal that the former senator may be willing to exploit the former mayor's tangled relationships with the New York City public employees unions. So far nothing else has come of the meeting, which was little noticed outside New York. But it was noticed inside the Giuliani campaign. And the mayor was not pleased.

The Republican presidential race has entered a fallow period. Not much is happening. This allows Giuliani to continue to build his organization, raise millions, and issue policy statements. "Through the summer the mayor will continue to drive his message, define himself, and set the agenda for this campaign," Giuliani director of strategy Brent Seaborn wrote in a recent email to supporters. The mayor seems to have been successful—so far. The real test will likely come in the fall. That's when his opponents may finally wake up to the fact that Rudolph Giuliani has a better chance than they do at winning the Republican nomination. ♦

Mark Sanford vs. the Good Old Boy Party

Can South Carolina's government be brought into the 21st century?

By Fred Barnes

Greenville, South Carolina

Governor Mark Sanford is standing in front of Brown's Bait and Tackle. It's located on the outskirts of Greenville beside a small lake. The shop's owner wears a T-shirt identifying him as "Man's Bass Friend." A sign warns "after hours" customers: "Paid Fishermen Only. No Fines, Loafing, Drinking. Fishing Fee $2.00. Ramp Fee $3.00. Honor Box at Front Door." Sanford is surrounded by about 20 small business owners who sell hunting and fishing equipment.

The popular governor, a Republican who bucked the Democratic tide in 2006 and was reelected overwhelmingly, is in casual clothes. More often than not, he appears in public without a coat and tie, and that's the case today. He wears a Polo shirt, slacks, and loafers with tassels. His home—when he's not in the governor's mansion—is on Sullivan's Island, an upscale suburb of Charleston on the fashionable South Carolina coast. Sanford is not a country boy. He has an MBA from the University of Virginia.

With a poised and polished politician confronting outdoorsmen (and women), you might expect a culture clash. But there is none. These are Sanford's people. The issue he's addressing in what he calls "an impromptu town hall meeting" is their issue: the state legislature's insistence on cutting the sales tax to 3 percent from 6 percent for two chain stores specializing in hunting and fishing goods, Cabela's and Bass Pro Shops. The small shop owners won't get the tax break, which is partly why Sanford vetoed it, only to have his veto overridden.

If this controversy strikes you as inconsequential, that's perfectly understandable. A tax break to encourage retailers to open stores—nothing unusual about that. Most states offer incentives to lure corporations and investment. South Carolina was famous, while Republican Carroll Campbell was governor in the 1990s, for piling on the financial favors to attract a sprawling BMW auto plant to Spartanburg.

Yet Sanford spent an entire day in mid-July flying around South Carolina to spur opposition to far less lucrative tax breaks for two retail chains. How come? Two reasons. First, Sanford is a unique governor, not given to the normal give and take of governing. He's idealistic and principled and visionary. He loathes easy compromise and special interest handouts. He doesn't court or hang out with legislators. Second, the tax issue lies at the heart of his struggle with the legislature for power and influence in South Carolina.

Sanford, 47, aims high. He's not only committed to overhauling the structure of the state government and slashing spending, he also wants to reform and modernize the state's political culture. Then there's his breathtakingly ambitious plan to drive his opponents in the legislature out of office next year by beating them in primary elections. "He truly believes if you're to begin to change South Carolina, you have to change some of the people in government," says senate majority whip Jim Ritchie. All this seems an impossible task, but Sanford is undeterred.

"My strength and my weakness is that whatever I believe, I *really* believe," Sanford told me. "I can be completely wrong, but I'll really believe it."

Sanford isn't wrong. He understands, and has since he announced for governor in 2002, that South Carolina's government is antiquated and cumbersome. It's literally premodern, having been established by the constitution of 1895 under the guidance of racist ex-governor Pitchfork Ben Tillman and made even worse in 1950 when Strom Thurmond was governor.

Now here's the rub: Sanford's fight is not with Democrats but with a legislature controlled by his fellow Republicans. "The good news for South Carolina is Republi-

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cans run everything," says Republican senator Lindsey Graham. "The bad news is we run everything." And that, Graham says, inevitably leads to tension between the governor and the legislature.

It's worse than that. Sanford and the leaders of the legislature are as different in ideology and style as Jack Kemp and Strom Thurmond—Kemp the smooth-talking, tax-cutting reformer, Thurmond the Democrat-turned-Republican conservative whose long career in South Carolina politics was rarely associated with reform or modernization of anything.

Sanford's chief antagonist in the legislature, Hugh Leatherman, is another former Democrat. Leatherman, 76, is chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, and his idea of the role of government is deeply at odds with Sanford's. He likes to spend, particularly to help people in his hometown of Florence. Sanford prefers to cut, and not only spending but the size of government.

Leatherman is a close friend of Don Fowler, the former Democratic national chairman and now the wise man of the state Democratic party. Fowler says Leatherman "just can't abide the governor, and I think the governor feels the same way." Indeed, Sanford does.

The governor "is a very nice guy personally," Fowler says, "but he believes government functions should be minimal in every respect. The people of South Carolina want government to do things. A lot of Republicans in South Carolina agree. Ideologically, the legislature is no different from the legislature 50 years ago when it was Democratic. They changed partisan identity because that's the way the political winds were blowing. But it's no different than it was 50 years ago."

A Sanford aide describes the state's politics similarly: "In South Carolina we have the Republican party, the Democratic party, and larger than either of them is the good old boy party. They're interested in one thing—keeping the status quo."

This is precisely what infuriates Sanford. "We don't have a conservative majority in the senate," he complains. It's filled with former Democrats. Leatherman spent 25 years as an elected Democrat, Sanford says, and has "shifted parties in name only." State senator Greg Ryberg, a rare Sanford ally in the senate, echoes the governor. "Most of the Republicans in the legislature aren't Republicans," he says. "They're RINOs"—Republicans in name only.

What's new in South Carolina is a governor like Sanford. "He's the one who's different," Fowler says. "It's not the legislature. Sanford is a maverick. He's an anomaly among South Carolina governors, Republican or Democrat."

True enough. Sanford's governing philosophy is close to being libertarian. "Whatever government does, it ought to do well," he says. "Whatever government doesn't have to do, it should let the private sector do." It rankles Sanford, for instance, that the state runs golf courses. "This is not something the state has to do," he says. But he's so far failed to privatize the golf courses.

Five years into Sanford's governorship, Leatherman and his legislative pals are winning most of the skirmishes. South Carolina was blessed with a $1.5 billion surplus this year. Sanford wanted to "get the money out of town" as tax cuts. "If they keep it in town, it'll be spent," he told me. "They want to spend every dime of it." And they wound up doing just that.

Legislators treated Sanford's vetoes with contempt. He vetoed 243 bills, which represented less than 3 percent of the state's $7.4 billion budget. Only 15 vetoes were sustained. Logrolling prevailed. The senate, Leatherman's turf, didn't bother to debate the bills or even have a roll call vote on each override. Glenn McConnell, the president pro tem of the senate, insisted this was Sanford's fault. If he hadn't vetoed so many bills, the senate might have had more time to deliberate.

There was an element of payback in this. In 2004, after his vetoes were given short shrift, Sanford took two pigs up the stairs of the capitol and into the legislature. One was named Pork, the other Barrel. "The boys and girls in the legislature were outraged at this insensitivity," says Dan Hoover, the respected political writer for the *Greenville News*. "The public loved it."

Sanford has been a popular figure since he ran as a political neophyte for the U.S. House seat from Charleston in 1994. He defeated Van Hipp, the ex-Republican state chairman who'd been heavily favored. In Congress, Sanford joined forces with small-government conservatives and radical budget cutters. In 2000, he kept his promise to serve only three terms and retired.

Two years later, he was back in politics with a visionary campaign for governor. He carried an easel and charts around the state, and his speeches amounted to nerdy but persuasive lectures. He said the state must slow the growth of government, reform the bureaucracy, attract investment, and create jobs. His key proposal: a plan to eliminate South Carolina's regressive 7 percent income tax over 18 years. He also endorsed a radical school voucher scheme.

Sanford easily ousted Democratic governor Jim Hodges, but his agenda was thwarted from the start by the Republican legislature. Leatherman, among others, prefers smaller, targeted tax cuts. So while the income tax rate is stuck at 7 percent, groceries have been exempted from the state sales tax and the tax rate on small business was cut to 5 percent from 7 percent.

The governor has made no deals on taxes or spend-

ing. And South Carolina remains relatively poor, with high taxes and government spending 33 percent higher than the average state. This, in Sanford's view, is a recipe for keeping the state uncompetitive in a global economy. Today the state's jobless rate, 5.5 percent, is well above the national average.

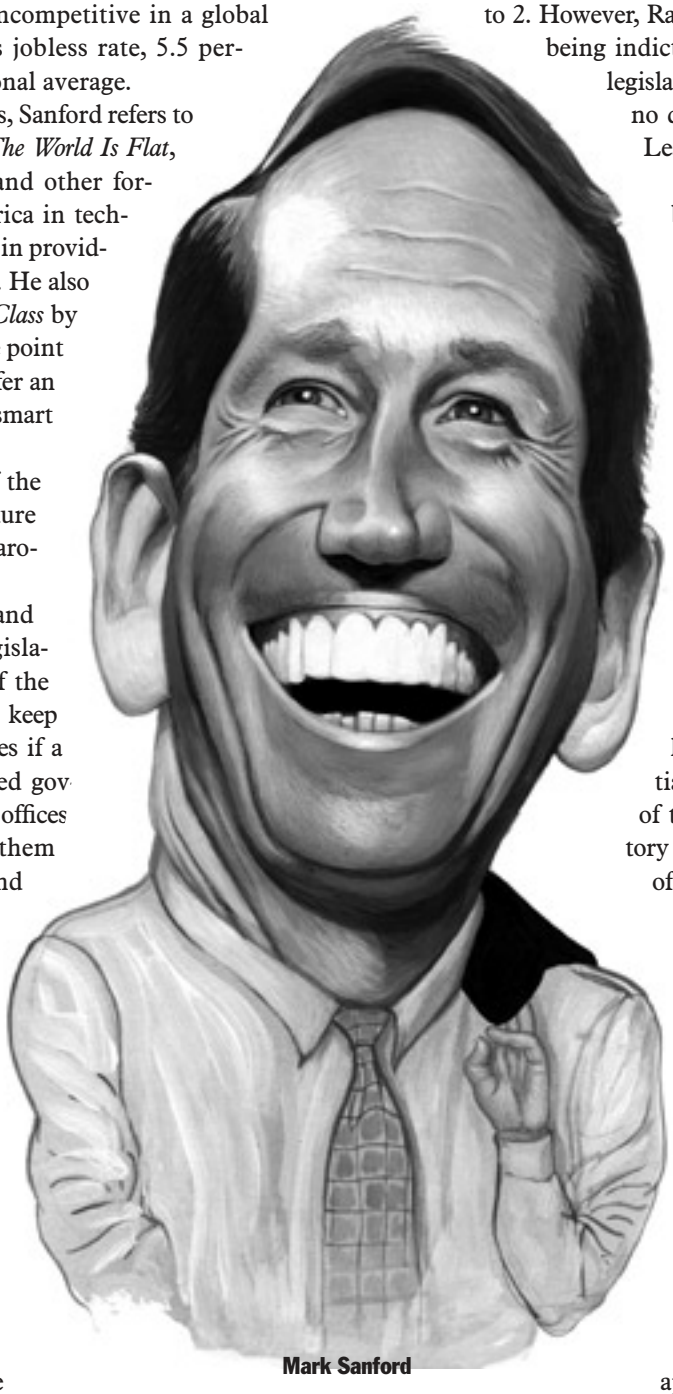
In his speeches these days, Sanford refers to Thomas Friedman's book, *The World Is Flat*, which argues that Asians and other foreigners compete with America in technology and services, not just in providing cheap labor for factories. He also cites *The Rise of the Creative Class* by Richard Florida to make the point that South Carolina must offer an appealing lifestyle to attract smart people to the state.

For Sanford, the core of the state's problem is the structure of its government. South Carolina is a "legislature state."

It has a weak governor and a strong but provincial legislature. This was the intent of the 1895 constitution, drafted to keep power in the hands of whites if a black happened to be elected governor. It shattered statewide offices into nine pieces, none of them beholden to the governor and all reliant on the legislature for funding.

When V.O. Key Jr. wrote about South Carolina in his seminal book *Southern Politics* in 1949, he cited "localism" (aside from anxiety about race) as the chief characteristic of the state government. State legislators saw their overarching duty as steering funds to their home county. Today, many still do.

With the creation of the Budget and Control Board in 1950, the governor lost even more power. The board has five members: the governor, comptroller, state treasurer, and chairmen of the senate finance committee and house ways and means committee. The board is unique in state government, mixing legislative and executive powers, controlling roughly 10 percent of state spending, and administering state agencies.



Mark Sanford

"For four years of my life, we fought this thing and always lost 3 to 2," Sanford says. But after Thomas Ravenel was elected treasurer in 2006, Sanford began to win 3 to 2. However, Ravenel resigned last week after being indicted on a cocaine charge. The legislature will appoint his successor, no doubt someone satisfactory to Leatherman.

Sanford would scrap the board and bring the entire bureaucracy under the governor's control. He has a long way to go. Campbell started this process when he was governor, reining in nearly a dozen state offices. But he was aided by a scandal in the legislature. An FBI sting called Operation Lost Trust led to the indictment of 28 legislators.

Since then, Sanford has made some small progress. This year, he stared the legislature down and won partial control of the department of transportation. But again, victory was attained only in the wake of a highly publicized audit that found widespread waste in the department.

For South Carolina to become prosperous and competitive, the legislature—indeed, the state itself—must abandon its obsessive focus on local communities and adopt a statewide perspective, Sanford believes. "We can't afford this Balkanized, feudal approach to governance and compete in the 21st century," he told me.

At the moment, there's a huge impediment to achieving Sanford's vision—South Carolinians. As popular as he is, Sanford has been unable to rouse the public to demand sweeping reform and toss out the older generation of Republican senators. Ritchie, the senate whip, says Sanford is right in casting his adversaries in generational

Illustration by Earl Kelemy

terms. The older Republicans "were conservative Democrats who believe in the power of government to effect change rather than rely on the people and the market to make us competitive."

Sanford has the financial means and a strategy for targeting them. He spent $6 million in his reelection race but has $1.8 million left over. And he's term-limited and won't be running for governor again. Besides, he is a phenomenal fundraiser.

He has friends. The South Carolina Club for Growth backs him fervently. It has a political action committee and is run by Sanford supporter Chad Walldorf, who founded the Sticky Fingers restaurant chain. There's also ReformSC, an issue organization (also run by Walldorf), plus an educational nonprofit, Carolinians for Reform, and another PAC, Carolinians for Change, all of them concentrating on the reform agenda.

So Sanford is loaded for bear. Yet many in the South Carolina political community are dubious about his determination to wage a strenuous, uphill political battle. Will he recruit a candidate to challenge Leatherman, for example, in next year's primary and campaign aggressively for him? We'll see.

Sanford is relentless when he wants to be. He is a stickler for principle who doggedly refuses to settle for weak compromises, which is why he vetoed an open enrollment bill masquerading as a significant step toward school vouchers. He has vetoed the tax break for Cabela's and Bass Pro Shops three times. As a further irritant to legislators, Sanford personally writes lengthy, serious veto messages.

The tax break (along with other subsidies) for two chains, he wrote in June in a single-spaced, three-page message, "does what we should never do to small business in our state—take their money to subsidize a large corporate competitor that could well put them out of business. We have never before used sales taxes in this way. . . . It's extremely unfair."

Sanford pinpointed the larger issue at stake. "It's inefficient and ultimately disadvantageous to have 170 'secretaries of commerce' rather than one secretary negotiating deals on behalf of the state," he wrote. By doing so, "the legislature forgoes the kind of full exploration needed to formulate an economic strategy beneficial to the entire state."

That was Sanford's way of saying the legislature is locking the state in an economic stone age. And that, if he has his way, is what must change. ♦

Never Speak to Strangers

A memoir of journalism, the Cold War, and the KGB

By David Satter

February 1977

A bleak, overcast day in Riga had given way to a night that was clear and bitter cold. The red lights on the last car of the Riga to Tallinn overnight train glowed in the frigid air as the train backed into the station. I gathered my things and walked to the seventh car, where I handed in my ticket and boarded the train. I entered my compartment and was surprised to see a young woman seated on one of the bunks. She had black hair, which was freshly set, a heart-shaped face, pale complexion, and lovely dark eyes. I guessed she was about 28 years old.

I took off my coat, put my suitcase under the bunk, and sat down opposite her. Two other people soon joined us. The first was a tall, sandy-haired man with broad shoulders who was wearing a heavy coat and a double-breasted jacket. He said he was a boxing instructor from the Ukraine. The second was another woman in her twenties, who entered the compartment carrying several packages. She was thin and birdlike with a petulant expression. She had red hair and wore bright red lipstick. She said her name was Masha Ivanova.

As the train began moving, the attendant gave us back our tickets and brought us glasses of tea. Rivers and the skeletons of bridges passed by in the moonlight. The pale lights of occasional villages appeared and disappeared on the horizon, and the train was soon rolling rhythmically through a landscape of pine forests and snow-blanketed fields.

It occurred to me that it might be more than just a coincidence that a man and two attractive women my own age were riding in the same compartment with me. But I decided that this compartment on a train between two Baltic capitals on a quiet Saturday night—which the KGB was undoubtedly taking off anyway—was a sanctuary. I felt relaxed. Besides, I believed that members of my generation had something in common wherever we happened to be.

I had decided to travel to the Baltics at the suggestion of Kestutis Jokubynas, a former Lithuanian political prisoner I had met in Moscow. Kestutis and I agreed to meet in Vilnius, where he lived, and he promised to give me the names of contacts in Riga and Tallinn. Being new to the Soviet Union, I also asked the Soviet news agency, Novosti, for help in setting up official interviews.

I arrived in Vilnius by train on February 15 shortly after dawn, and met Kestutis at my hotel. We took a bus to his apartment. He lived in a single room in a housing block in a new area of the city. A solitary window let in the gray light of an overcast day, and the walls were bare except for a rectangle of barbed wire over the foldout bed, a reminder of the 17 years that Kestutis had spent in the camps. Kestutis poured me a cup of tea. He said he had little hope that he would live to see an independent Lithuania. He then mentioned, almost as an afterthought, that the next day, February 16, was the anniversary of Lithuanian independence.

At 5 P.M., it became dark. We traveled by bus to the Old City, the heart of historic Vilnius, a section of weathered stone buildings, winding narrow streets, and gloomy inner courtyards in the shadow of ornate Catholic churches. From there, we took a bus to see Antanas Terleckas, another nationalist, who lived outside of Vilnius, on the edge of the Nemencine Forest. When we arrived, Terleckas welcomed us, and we entered a small room crowded with

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people of all ages who were sitting on worn couches and chairs. The conversation was about what would happen the next day, with nearly everyone predicting a show of force on the streets as in past years on February 16.

Several of the teenagers said that they would try to put flowers on the grave of Jonas Basanavicius, the father of the Lithuanian national movement, who, by an odd coincidence, had died on February 16. The point of laying flowers on his grave was to mark the national anniversary. But if stopped by the police, they could pretend that it was a personal gesture on the anniversary of Basanavicius's death. This would convince no one, but the police could be counted on not to arrest them at the graveside because that would acknowledge their fear of nationalism, which officially did not exist.

The dissidents described the Lithuanian national activity in recent months—underground journals, the raising of the old Lithuanian flag over the Ministry of Internal Affairs, arrests. I filled up most of a notebook. When we parted, I agreed to meet Kestutis in front of my hotel at 7 the following night.

The next morning was cold and overcast. I went with my Novosti guide for an interview with a government official, then in the afternoon for a trip to a collective farm. On the way, our car stopped to pick up a man who said he was an agronomist.

We left the collective farm in the late afternoon, and the agronomist proposed that we take tea at a nearby club. I was anxious to return to Vilnius but agreed, and we drove for 20 minutes before arriving at an isolated house. Although we had supposedly come for tea, the table was set for an elaborate meal. The agronomist said the club contained a Finnish sauna. He referred to the sauna several more times and then, elbowing me gently, asked, "How would you like to try it out?"

I declined politely, trying not to show how uncomfortable I was with the suggestion. An hour passed in increasingly stilted conversation. Finally, ignoring the agronomist and addressing the guide, I said I wanted to leave. This brought an angry response from the agronomist, who insisted the time had come to try out the Finnish bath. The agronomist, the guide, and the manager of the club began chanting, "Finnish bath, Finnish bath." I finally got up, took my coat, and walked out to the car. It was only after I'd stood outside for 15 minutes that my guide and the agronomist joined me and we drove back into town.

I arrived in Vilnius at 7:30 P.M., but there was no sign of Kestutis. I called Valery Smolkin, one of his friends. He said Kestutis had probably been arrested, and suggested I come to his apartment to wait. I caught a cab, and we turned down one of the side streets, where I saw the scene the nationalists had predicted the previous night. At each corner, uniformed police surrounded by milling crowds of obvious plainclothesmen were stopping passersby and checking their documents. The cab driver, a Russian, said a policeman had been shot in a robbery of the state insurance company.

I arrived at Smolkin's apartment at 8:40 P.M. Three hours later, there was a knock at the door and Smolkin opened it to Kestutis, who took off his coat, wet with newfallen snow. He said that he had been on his way to meet me in front of the hotel when he'd been surrounded by five plainclothesmen. He was taken to a police station—the same one where he was taken after his first arrest in 1947—and put in a cell. He was then interrogated by a police officer who appeared drunk and spoke in a weird combination of Russian and Lithuanian and told him he was a suspect in the robbery of the state insurance company. "I've been in the camps," Kestutis said. "I'm not going to participate in your comedy."

In the end, we spoke for several more hours, and Kestutis gave me the address of Ints Tsalitis, a Latvian nationalist in Riga, and the names and addresses of dissidents in Estonia. He also made one request. He asked me to make sure my notes from Lithuania never left my hands. I agreed, and at that moment, I certainly intended to keep my promise.

The next morning I flew to Riga (the train from Vilnius to Riga was closed to foreigners). After I checked into my hotel, I realized that my notebook was full and I would need a new one to interview city officials. I remembered my promise to keep my notes with me, but the notebook was an awkward size. I finally forced it into my jacket pocket and left for the interview. That afternoon, however, I put the notebook in my suitcase and locked the suitcase in my room, leaving the key with the room clerk downstairs.

When I returned to the hotel, it was already dark. I asked the girl at the reception desk for the key to my room. But she looked and said she could not find it. I went upstairs and asked the floor attendant, but she did not have the key either. Now seriously worried, I went out for a walk. When I returned, I asked the girl at the desk to check again for my key. "Here it is," she said, reaching into a slot in the key rack, "it was here all along."

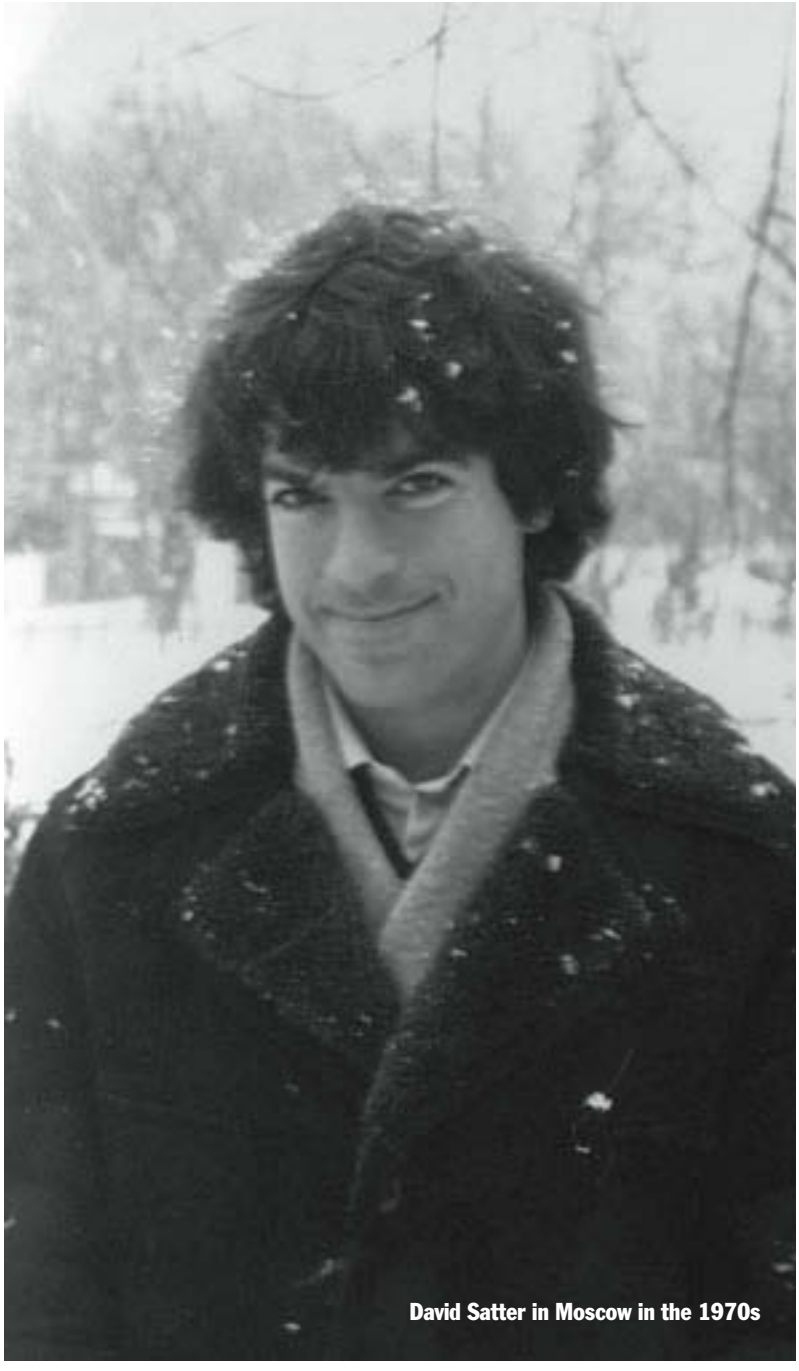
I took the key and went upstairs to my room. The light of the street lamps cast a pale glow in the darkness through the room's nylon curtains. I opened my suitcase and saw that the notebook from Vilnius was still there. Everything appeared untouched.

I put the notebook back into my jacket pocket and caught a cab for Vecmilgravis, outside of Riga, to meet Tsalitis. I arrived at his home at 9 P.M. He welcomed me, and as we sat in his kitchen I told him about the events in Vilnius and warned him that I was probably being fol-

lowed. He put on his coat and went outside with his dog, a large St. Bernard. When he came back, he said there was a black car parked at the end of the street with four men in it. "They've probably been there for several hours," he said. "They don't have to follow you. They know there are only a few places for you to go. It saves them time and energy."

Tsalitis said that, in general, the situation was quieter in Latvia. There were no active dissident groups or samizdat journals. "The Latvians find it easier to get along with others," he said. "It's a virtue, but it's also our tragedy." Half an hour later, Viktors Kalnins, another nationalist, joined us, and he and Tsalitis gave me the names and addresses of Estonian nationalists in Tallinn. I wrote them on a separate piece of paper, but they were the same names Kestutis had given me in Lithuania.

The next day in Riga I visited another collective farm courtesy of Novosti. That evening I checked out of the hotel and prepared to go for a walk. Once again, I put the notebook in my suitcase. Not wanting to take a walk carrying a suitcase, I decided to leave it with the doorman. When I returned, I opened the suitcase. It appeared that nothing had been touched.



David Satter in Moscow in the 1970s

Courtesy of the author

It was only on the night train to Tallinn that I began to feel at ease. The Ukrainian boxing coach poured drinks for all of us, and Masha asked me where I was from. I told her that I was an American and that I was working in Moscow for the London *Financial Times*.

The coach asked what women were like in the United States. I said that they were better dressed than Soviet women but not necessarily prettier. Masha asked if I believed in God. I said that I did. This puzzled her. "Here, no one believes in God," she said. I then began to explain my views. As I continued, trying to make sense in less than perfect Russian, Masha moved slightly forward, leaning over the small table and resting her chin childishly on the rim of one of the tea glasses. The dark haired girl also fixed her eyes on me. Inexplicably relaxed, I motioned to Masha to sit beside me. She complied, and although I tried to continue what I was saying, she put her arms around me and began kissing me. The coach immediately went over to the other bunk and started kissing the dark haired girl, holding her in his arms and pressing her against him.

This situation did not last long because the two girls almost immediately told us to go into the corridor so they could make the beds and get undressed. Most of the other passengers in the car had retired for the night. As we waited in the corridor, it occurred to me that the women in the compartment, the offer of easy sex, were the standard techniques of entrapment. But it was exactly this that

allayed my fears. Planting women in an overnight train compartment was too obvious. If the goal had been entrapment, the KGB would have tried something less primitive. The idea that my new friends had been seated in my compartment for no other reason than to compromise me was just too incredible to believe.

When we went back into the compartment, the women were in their nightgowns. Masha was sitting on the upper bunk, her breasts and a crucifix visible through the opening of her gown. The dark-haired girl was lying on her side on the bottom bunk. We began to undress, and the boxing coach turned off the overhead lamp so the only light came from the reading light above each berth. I climbed into the upper berth and the coach got into the lower berth. The small lights were then turned off, leaving nothing to illuminate what went on until several hours later when the first filtering rays of sunlight indicated the break of day.

During the night, I was troubled by a dream, an indistinct image of the dark-haired girl moving around the compartment as if she were making preparations to leave. In the morning, after I opened my eyes, I became concerned about my suitcase. I pulled on my pants and climbed down from the upper bunk. The fields and forests looked blue in the early morning light. The coach was already dressed and sitting on the opposite lower berth. The girls were asleep in their beds. Joking with the coach, I reached for my suitcase. It was then I discovered that it was gone.

Suddenly, the coach began feeling the pockets of his jacket. "Wait a minute," he said, "my watch is gone!"

He looked down at the bunk where the dark haired girl was sleeping, curled up facing the wall. He pulled back the top blanket and under it found other blankets tightly rolled and arranged to create the impression of a sleeping person. I woke up Masha Ivanova and asked her what she knew about the dark-haired girl. She said that she had met her that evening for the first time. I called the attendant and asked her if she had noticed anyone leaving the train in the middle of the night. I explained that I had lost my suitcase and the boxing coach had lost his watch. She promised to alert the police.

The train arrived in Tallinn at 8:30 A.M., and we were met by the police and taken to their headquarters in the station. The police made clear that they viewed the case with the utmost seriousness. They insisted that we write detailed statements and stressed that any omission could impair the investigation. The coach and Masha wrote their statements and then Masha helped me to write mine. Reading the statements, the officer in charge began to wonder. "Two men and two women in one compartment," he said, his voice trailing off thoughtfully.

I now faced a dilemma of my own making. My notes from Lithuania were gone. It was urgent that I find the Estonian dissidents whose names and addresses were in my suitcase. Fortunately, the piece of paper where I had also written them was in my wallet.

We left the station and got in a line at the taxi stand. It was a cool, foggy morning, and behind us the Upper City of Tallinn, with its medieval walls and spires, was wreathed in mist. A jeep pulled up and a policeman offered us a ride. He took us to the Viru Hotel. As I got out of the jeep, Masha gave me her address in Tallinn.

I entered the hotel and got in line to register. As I waited, I gradually became aware of a short man in a fur hat and long coat trying to attract my attention. He finally cleared his throat, walked up to me, and shook hands, leaving a tiny piece of paper that had been folded over several times in my hand. He then turned and walked quickly through the lobby and out the front door of the hotel.

As I put the piece of paper in my pocket, a change came over me. For the first time, I started to feel like a spectator at a play in which I was also an involuntary participant. In spite of myself, I began to look forward to the next act.

I registered and took the elevator to my room. Once in my room, I read the note. It asked me to call a telephone number in Tallinn from a pay phone. I went downstairs and dialed the number. I told myself that if a Russian answered the phone, I had reached the KGB. If the voice was Estonian, it might be the Estonian dissidents. The voice was Estonian. In heavily accented Russian, a man asked me to wait in front of the Tallinna Kaubamaja, the city's main department store, at exactly 1 P.M. The man who had given me the note would meet me there. When I tried to ask another question, he hung up.

I left the hotel and went to the department store. At one o'clock, I was met by the man from the hotel lobby. He signaled to me to follow him, and we proceeded in single file down a diagonal street between five-story housing blocks to an archway and entered a courtyard. He then stepped into an entryway and up a flight of steps. The door opened for him, and as soon as I followed him into the small apartment, it was quickly closed and locked behind me.

I was ushered into a dimly lit sitting room. In the middle of the table, there were several empty glasses and an unopened bottle of cognac. The man who had brought me to the apartment motioned for me to take a chair at the head of the table, and the others—three men of about middle age—gathered in chairs around the table in a rough semicircle. My guide then took up a perch directly opposite me on the windowsill.

I looked around at my companions. The man on my

Tallinn, the Old City

Corbis / Franz Marc Frei

right was tall and thin with a mournful expression. Next to him was the man who had met me in the hotel. The next person was also short with a sheaf of sandy-colored hair over his forehead. On my left, the fourth member of the group sat in a large armchair. He had a round face and intelligent, gray eyes. He was the only member of the group with a genuinely humane expression.

The tall, mournful-looking man got up, opened the bottle of cognac, and poured me a drink. I nodded and took a sip. He then returned to his chair and said in Russian but with a thick Estonian accent, "What happened to you? We saw you with the police at the station."

For some reason, I suddenly was convinced that I was in the presence of the KGB. "I think you know the answer to that question better than I do," I said.

"We are very worried," said the man with the sandy hair, ignoring my reaction, "we want to know what happened to you."

"I was with the police," I said, "because my suitcase was stolen in the middle of the night from the train. Why don't you tell me where it is?"

"Our movement may be in danger because of you," the sandy-haired man continued. "Were our names in the suitcase that was stolen?"

"I don't know who you are. I also don't know anything about any names."

"Did Viktors Kalnins give you our names?" the sandy haired man persisted.

The tall, solemn man seemed demoralized by the hopelessness of the situation. "Viktors called me," he said, "and we went to the station to meet you, but we left when we saw you talking to the police."

"So," I said, "you are trying to tell me that someone arranged for you to meet me in Tallinn?" Several of them nodded their heads yes.

"Show me some identification," I said.

"No, we don't show any identification," said the sandy-haired man, shaking his head firmly.

"I'm glad to hear that," I said, "because for a moment it occurred to me that you might actually be the dissidents, but if you won't identify yourselves, it only proves to me that you're the KGB."

The superficial politeness that had prevailed up until that point disappeared. The tall, solemn member of the group leaned over the table. "I spent twelve years in the camps," he said. "My friends have spent six, seven, and eight years in the camps. You're not going to treat us like a bunch of niggers."

This remark took me completely by surprise. Could it be that I was accusing them unfairly?

"You're operating on a false assumption," said the older man whose expression had been the most sympathetic. "The KGB can forge any kind of identification it wants. In a situation like this, you can't rely on documents." He hesitated and then added gently, "You have to believe what is in your heart."

He asked me if I had the names and addresses of the people I was to see. I said that I knew who I was supposed to see. I then removed the paper with the names and addresses from my wallet. "Now, tell me," I said, "who are you?" The tall, solemn man on my right said, "I am Valdo Reinart." The man who met me in the hotel lobby said, "I am Endel Ratas." The intense, sandy-haired man said, "I am Mart Niklus," and the older man on the left smiled and said, "And I am Erik Udam." Udam was the leader of the Estonian dissidents. Udam then asked if there were addresses written on my note. I said there were, and each man gave his correct address.

Reinart got up, a little less obviously distressed, and filled my glass with cognac and then poured drinks for the others around the table, who also began to relax. Udam asked me to tell him about the theft of my suitcase.

I hesitated for a moment and then decided to tell them what had happened. If they were dissidents, they were entitled to know, and if they were KGB agents, what I said would come as no surprise. I began to describe what had happened and, as I told them how I was distracted, pained expressions came over the faces of the four men. When I finished, Reinart said, "I'll call Viktors immediately so he can warn everyone that your notes are missing."

They then began to argue among themselves. Udam suggested that the theft was organized by black market operators, but Niklus disagreed. "This was the KGB," he said. Reinart asked me what we talked about. "Not much," I said, "just trivialities."

"They didn't ask you any questions?"

"Nothing special."

"That doesn't sound like the KGB," Reinart said. "They always try to find out everything they can."

The conversation shifted to whether or not it was safe for us to meet later. We finally agreed that they would try to assess the situation, and Ratas would meet me at 10 P.M. that night in front of the Tallinna Kaubamaja.

Before we got ready to leave, I told Reinart that I was sorry about what had happened. For the first time, his manner seemed to soften. "What can you do," he said reflectively, "a young man, a beautiful woman . . . "

Udam said he had one request before I left. He wanted me to leave the list with the dissidents' addresses and names with them. "It's not that we don't trust you," he said. "We just can't afford another mistake." I took the list out of my wallet and gave it to Udam, and he put it in an ashtray and lit it with a match, holding the match to the list until it had been reduced to a wisp of ash.

I returned to my hotel where I met my official guide. We agreed on a program for the next day. I then left the hotel to look for Masha. But I soon discovered that the address she had given me did not exist.

I went to my room, then went to the lobby where I stopped to buy a postcard. I suddenly had the feeling that someone was watching me.

I returned to the Viru, went to my room, then went to the lobby where I stopped to buy a postcard. I suddenly had the feeling that someone was watching me. When I turned to look, the only person I noticed was a young man with a mustache and goatee who was holding a square attaché case.

I finally left the hotel and walked to the Old City. There had been a slight break in the weather and a fine rain was falling. Some of the accumulated ice on the roofs was beginning to thaw, causing water to drip from the eaves and run down the drainpipes. In the streetlamps' hazy light, the paint peeling from the façades of the buildings made them look particularly shabby. I turned down one of the side streets, and through the window of a gabled stone building, I could see people queuing, waiting to test loaves in the bread racks for freshness. The drumbeat of dripping water was punctuated by the slamming of the heavy wooden door to the bread store as people left with their purchases. A little bit further down the same street, I passed a dimly lit café where, through a gauze curtain, I could see pensioners carrying their tin trays to metal tables and an old crone mopping up the broken tiles on the floor. I entered a quiet alleyway that ran along the city wall. At last, I came to a cul de sac, where I was surprised to see an old woman with a few wisps of scraggly gray hair, a lined face, and a dazed look in her wide-open eyes. She stood motionless in the rain hold-

ing a tin can filled with pencils and made no effort to speak, looking past me as if I weren't there.

Shortly before 10 P.M. I returned to the hotel, where a group of Finnish tourists were showing the effects of heavy drinking. Finally, I walked to the door and glanced behind me. On the upper mezzanine, I saw the man with the attaché case.

At 10 o'clock, I met Ratas at the Tallinna Kaubamaja. "They're following you!" he said, his face completely contorted. "Be here tomorrow, 2 P.M."

The next morning I went with my guide to an agricultural institute outside Tallinn. The meeting lasted for several hours. I excused myself from the lunch that had been prepared and left the institute at 1 P.M.

As we rode back to Tallinn, I tried to imagine how I could meet the dissidents without being followed. Suddenly, I recalled a rundown hotel in the Old City called the Hotel Baltika that I had noticed the previous night. As we approached the Old City, I asked the driver to let me off at this hotel. There was a moment of confusion but the guide agreed that the driver could stop there.

I got out of the car. I then cut back through a small park and started to climb the stone steps to the Upper City. Factories and railroad lines, the yellow cranes of Tallinn harbor, and rows of brown and grey Soviet apartment blocks spread out before me. Glancing back, I turned and saw a man in a silver jacket at the bottom of the steps starting to climb rapidly. I got to the top and hurried along a narrow path between the stone houses. Looking back again, I saw that my pursuer had reached the top of the steps. I turned into the entryway of a Lutheran church, where an official Soviet guide, mistaking me for a tourist, began to describe the torture of heretics that had been performed there.

I left the church, turned down a cobbled path between two stone walls, and then hurried across a broad square. My pursuer appeared from around a corner. Finally, in desperation, I turned and began to advance on him. When he realized that I was coming toward him, he quickly turned his back. I changed directions and doubled back behind one of the government buildings and made my way to the wall of the Upper City. I began going down the steps, watching for my pursuer. To my surprise, I did not see him. I plunged into the crowded streets of the Old City and flagged down a cab. With 15 minutes to go before the scheduled meeting, I arrived at the Tallinna Kaubamaja, where scores of people were stepping through the slush. There were old, fat women with canes, young women with pallid faces and stringy blonde hair, nondescript men in worn overcoats, and, off to one side, the old woman with the can of pencils whom I had encountered the previous night.

At exactly 2 P.M., Ratas appeared on the street and led me to a nearby courtyard. He said that KGB agents were everywhere and the group had decided it was too dangerous for us to meet in Tallinn. They wanted to meet not in Tallinn but in Moscow. I asked Ratas if he had reached Kalnins to tell him about the loss of my notes. He said "our friends" had been informed.

The train for Moscow left as darkness fell, and I was relieved to see that my companion in the compartment was a woman engineer in her 50s with a dark mustache. As we rode to Moscow, I tried to recreate my notes from memory, adding to them and elaborating on them.

The next few days in Moscow were uneventful. Life assumed its previous rhythm. I began to think that the events in the Baltics were an aberration and maybe even, to some extent, the product of my imagination. One night, about a week after I had gotten back, I decided to call Kestutis in Vilnius, although I had no doubt that Udam had already told him what had happened on the Riga to Tallinn train. I called from the central telegraph office, reaching him at the institute where he worked as an archivist.

After I described the loss of my suitcase, there was silence at the other end of the line. "What happened," Jokubynas asked, "were you drunk?" "Kestutis," I said, "We have to be careful. They may be listening." "Oh, yes," Kestutis said, and then his voice began to tremble. "They're listening. Of course, they're listening. They're listening to every word." With that I broke off the conversation and promised to call him again.

A week passed and there was no word from anyone in the Baltics, until one night I received a frantic call from someone who said he had to meet me and was waiting in front of the Puppet Theater across the street from my apartment on the Ring Road. I didn't recognize the caller's voice, and after the affair in the Baltics, I was wary of provocation. But I decided to go. When I pulled up in my car, I saw Antanas Terleckas and Ints Tsalitis.

We got into my car and began looking for a place to talk. It was too dangerous to talk in an apartment, and we would have had to queue for hours to get into a café. Finally, after driving around for half an hour, we adjourned to the stairwell of a building on Leninsky Prospect.

Neither Terleckas nor Tsalitis appeared upset about the consequences for them of the loss of my suitcase. They were more concerned to make sure that I did not lose the opportunity to write about nationalism, particularly in Lithuania. During the next hour, they repeated to me the information that I had received in the Baltics, much of which I had already reconstructed from memory. When

my notes were complete, we left the building and went for a ride in my car.

"The one thing you'll never find," Terleckas said as we turned into the Lenin Hills, "or at least almost never find is a Russian who is willing to recognize a small people's right to its own country. If you talk about Lithuania, they say that's our Russian land, our country."

I told Antanas that I liked the Russian people.

"They are good, sweet, kind people," he replied, "but it doesn't occur to them that the Lithuanians consider Lithuania to be their country and want to be able to live in it without them."

"By the way," Tsalitis said. "Why didn't you meet our friends in Estonia?" Below us, Moscow was a carpet of apartment lights broken by the shadows of gothic government skyscrapers. "They called me and wanted to know why you never contacted them."

"Who called you?"

"The Estonian nationalists, Udam, Ratas . . . "

"They said I never contacted them?"

"Yes."

"Ints, I spent two days in Tallinn with Udam and Ratas. I'm expecting them to meet me here. Did either of you get a telephone call from Estonia telling you that my suitcase with the notes on Latvia and Lithuania had been stolen?"

"No," Tsalitis said, "we heard about it from Kestutis." I pulled the car over to the side of the road. A light snow began to fall, and the snowflakes seemed to hang immobile in the arcs of light cast by the streetlamps.

I turned to look at Tsalitis and Terleckas who were sitting in the back seat. "If I didn't spend those two days with Udam and Ratas," I said, "then who did I spend them with?"

There was silence in the car.

"Do you mean?"

Antanas smiled. "They're clever. You've got to hand them that."

"Yes," I said, "but these were Estonians."

"The Estonian KGB," Tsalitis said.

"You mean the whole thing, the meetings, the arguments, the discussion of KGB tactics, the small army they had following me, all that was a performance?"

"They are brilliant actors," Antanas said.

"But what was the point of it? Just to prevent me from meeting a group of Estonian dissidents?"

"Not only that," said Antanas. "The Soviet Union is a land of miracles, and from time to time the KGB likes to create reality."

The snow was coming down harder now, and it was getting late. We rode silently along the embankment of the Moscow River to Kutuzovsky Prospekt and then across the bridge and past the American embassy to the Sadovoye Ring Road. I drove them to the bridge over Tsvetnoy Boulevard, where we got out of the car and shook hands. Terleckas gestured toward me as they got ready to leave. "Look at him," he said to Tsalitis, "a free man. Can you imagine, a free man."

Several weeks after my meeting with Terleckas and Tsalitis, the *Financial Times* published my report on nationalism in Lithuania under the headline "The Ghost in the Machine." A detailed summary of the article was broadcast back to the Soviet Union by the Russian service of the BBC, so in the end the Lithuanian dissidents got their wish. What was happening in the republic became known in both the Soviet Union and the West.

I never did make direct contact with the Estonian dissidents, but in May the real Erik Udam arrived in Moscow and left a statement describing the KGB's reaction to my visit to Tallinn. I was away and received a copy of the statement only several weeks later. According to Udam, Major Albert Molok of the Estonian KGB met with Udam in April at Molok's request and suggested he organize a dissident group to give false information to Western correspondents. Molok said that it was his achievement that David Satter of the *Financial Times* had not met with Udam in February. He said Udam could choose the group's members but they would have to be approved by the KGB. Udam said that such a scheme would quickly be discovered, and Molok offered to make sure that the group was lightly persecuted in order to keep the KGB connection secret. When Udam rejected Molok's suggestion, Molok asked him if he could recommend someone else, but Udam said he would not recommend such a gigantic deception to anyone.

I ended up working five more years for the *Financial Times* in Moscow and never again fell for a KGB provocation. Indeed, I became convinced that Terleckas was right and the whole point of the Soviet system was to create reality and then impose this world of illusions on a helpless population by force. In early 1983, I testified before the U.S. Congress on "Stopping Communism without War," and argued that the Soviet Union's false ideology compelled it to create illusions and, as a result, the most effective weapon against communism was not arms but the truth. I published an article based on this testimony on the editorial page of the *Wall Street Journal*.

Several days after the article appeared, I wrote to Kestutis and enclosed a copy. Kestutis had succeeded in leaving Lithuania and was working for the Lithuanian service of Radio Liberty in Munich. A week later, a reply came that showed he had finally forgiven me for my mistakes in the Baltics. It said: "You did not spend your years in the Soviet Union in vain." ♦

Crown Books

Robert Novak, Rowland Evans, mid-1960s

The Outsider

Inside politics with Robert Novak BY MICHAEL BARONE

I am a pessimist by nature, which is why I have spent my life as a journalist instead of trying to be a leader, which requires optimism.

So writes Robert Novak in this memoir entitled, inevitably, *The Prince of Darkness*. "I am not a person who is easy for a lot of people to like," he writes at another point. After the teenage Novak printed the names and addresses of all the bookies in town in the *Joliet Herald-News*, his editor told him it was "always better to be a 'builder-upper' than a 'tearer-downer.'" To which Novak adds, "I never dreamed of taking his advice."

He hasn't in the 50 years since he drove his yellow 1956 Ford convertible into Washington to work at the Associated Press bureau on Pennsylvania Avenue. Most reporters are liberal and most seem to me to be optimists. Novak has always been a Republican—though he voted for John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson—and has certainly always been a pessimist. That has given Novak a double advantage. Optimistic liberals always are on the lookout for signs that Democrats are winning and Republicans are losing. A pessimistic conservative is always alert for signs that his side as well as the other side is losing. Since, as the British politician Enoch Powell noted, "all political careers end in failure," and since every human enterprise is more likely to fail than to succeed, a pessimistic conservative will tend to get more scoops than his peers. Especially if he's a hell of a reporter.

The Prince of Darkness
50 Years Reporting in Washington
by Robert D. Novak
Crown, 672 pp., $29.95

Which Novak is, and was from early in life. His parents were staunch Republicans, but his mother took him to see Franklin Roosevelt speak in Joliet when he was five; on reading the text recently, he called the speech pabulum. He listened on the radio, at nine, to the 1940 Republican National Convention. At 15 he was writing sports stories for the local shopper; at 16 he became a sports stringer for the *Herald-News*. His uningratiating personality helped cost him the sports editorship of the University of Illinois *Daily Illini* (it went to historian Michael Beschloss's father) and seems to have caused university officials to deny him the one credit he needed to graduate (their successors supplied it in 1993).

He served two years in the Army after college and, in 1954, got a 12-week job in the Associated Press bureau in

Michael Barone is the author, most recently, of Our First Revolution: The Remarkable British Upheaval That Inspired America's Founding Fathers.

Omaha—the beginning of what is now 53 years in journalism. Asked to substitute for the guy who wrote predictions for high school football games, he told him he knew nothing about high school football. "'Kid,' he replied, 'do you think *I* do?'" Novak cribbed them from the *Omaha World-Herald*, with a few camouflaging changes. In 1955 the AP sent him to Lincoln for the legislative session, then to Indianapolis to cover the legislature and state politics there.

The young Novak presented himself then, as he has done through most of his career, as a regular guy—an enormous sports fan who loved fast cars and liked to stay up late drinking and smoking at bars. His prose has always been lean and muscular, but not especially graceful and certainly not literary. Like Ronald Reagan, he grew up at a time and a place and made his way up through a business in which it was always to his advantage to hide the fact that he was also a voracious reader and an intellectual. In *The Prince of Darkness* Novak gives some indication of his wide and serious reading and provides the key to his own political philosophy: Whittaker Chambers's *Witness*, which he read while in the Army. Chambers's pessimistic account of his break with communism, and his sense that he had left the winning side for the losing one, made Novak a passionate believer that the United States must win the Cold War. He always voted for the candidate who seemed most likely to vigorously prosecute the Cold War.

Other positions he came to hold later. His opposition to the Persian Gulf war in 1991 and the Iraq war in 2003 were the outgrowth of his agreement with the Arabist positions long advocated by his partner, Rowland Evans. Similarly, he came in the 1970s to agree with the supply-side economics of economist Arthur Laffer, *Wall Street Journal* editorialist Jude Wanniski, and Congressman Jack Kemp, and he has supported tax cuts ever since.

Novak made his way up in journalism the old-fashioned way: by hard work, and by being noticed and appreciated by older men who gave him crucial legs up. In Nebraska and Indiana the unmarried Novak stayed up late schmoozing with politicians and got stories everyone else missed. In Indianapolis he was asked to brief Doug Cornell, the AP's chief national political writer, on Indiana politics. It must have been a great briefing, because Cornell promised him a job in Washington—and delivered in May 1957.

In Washington he was the only member of the bureau under 30, and one of the few under 40, and was assigned to cover politicians from three midwestern states. But he grabbed the chance to be a "tail gunner," filling in for the regular AP reporters who were covering big stories while they ran out to file their copy. He covered a committee investigating Communists and got a scoop when he interviewed the staff director (a reporter for the *Chicago Tribune*!) about the next day's hearing.

In 1958 the *Wall Street Journal*'s Alan Otten, whom he had also briefed on Indiana politics, offered him a job covering the Senate and U.S. politics. He grabbed it and ran. He took every chance to write leaders (long front-page stories) and editpagers (op-ed pieces) and wrote more of them than anyone else at the *Journal*. (When he presented his first editpager, the bureau chief asked, "Did you write that entirely by yourself, or did somebody help you?") He led the pack on important stories, noting that the Senate majority leader (Lyndon Johnson) was weakened, not strengthened, by the Democrats' big gains in the 1958 election. Another original analysis prompted Vice President Richard Nixon to complain to *Journal* top editor Warren Phillips, who informed Novak of the complaint.

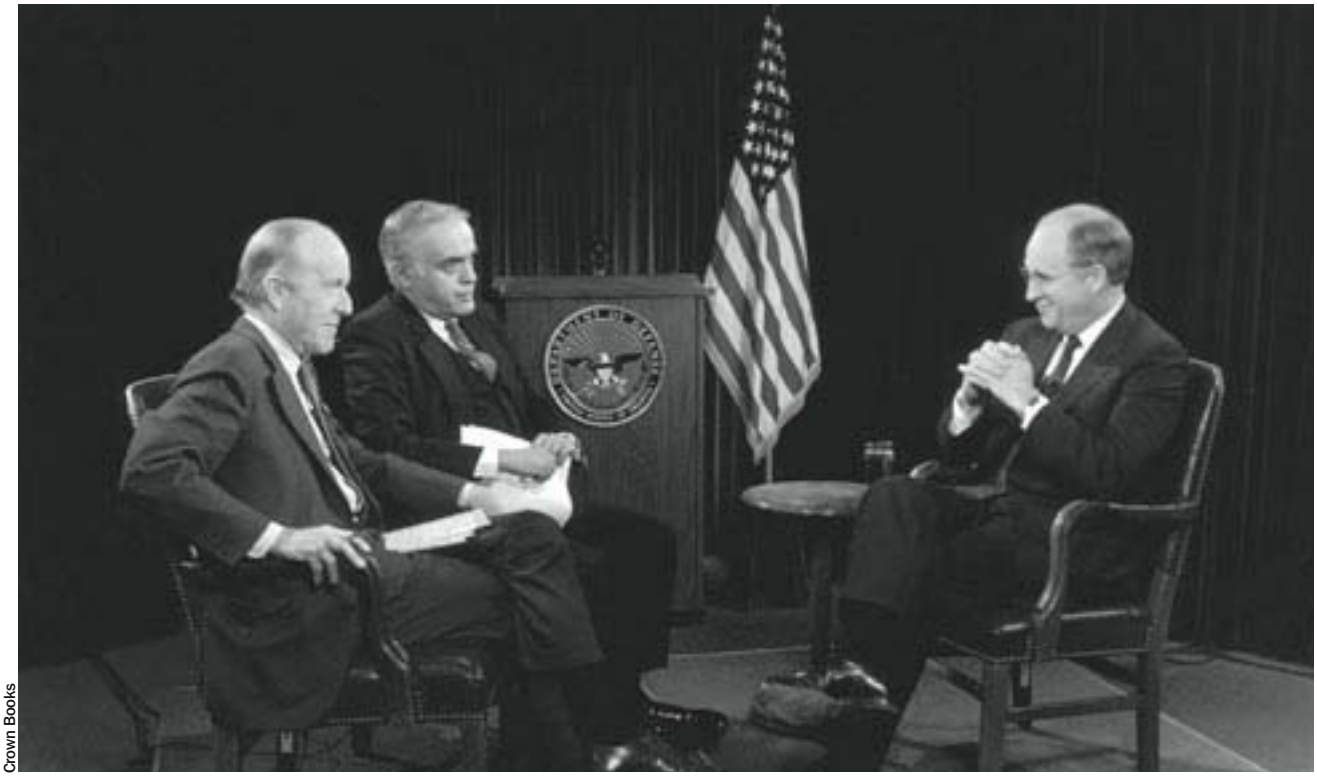
"'What should I do?' I asked. 'Nothing,' Phillips replied."

That was the joy of working for the *Wall Street Journal*. When the venerable editorial page editor Vermont Royster extensively rewrote one of his pieces, he insisted on yanking his byline. Royster was impressed, and a few years later asked him to come to New York and write editorials—with the hint that he could succeed him. Novak declined, and the job eventually went to Robert Bartley, who held it for more than 30 years. He beat the *New York Herald Tribune*'s hot reporter Rowland Evans on a story about a Democratic memo. Evans remembered, and in 1962, when *Trib* editor James Bellows offered Evans a six-days-a-week column, Evans called Novak. The first Evans and Novak column appeared in May 1963.

Novak makes it plain that he doesn't think much of politicians. "While John F. Kennedy was a failed president, Lyndon B. Johnson was a disaster." Hubert Humphrey was "well meaning and weak." He got to know Robert Kennedy (as counsel on the Senate labor rackets committee) "a little and dislike him a lot." Barry Goldwater was "far less focused than the Kennedys" and tended "not to follow through on what he had told me and other reporters he was going to do."

He saw Martin Luther King deliver "one of the greatest orations I have ever heard" at the Lincoln Memorial, but "I came to think of him as an exceptional orator who was badly organized in thought and deed and incapable of leading a great national movement." Richard Nixon was "a make believe tough guy" and "a poor president and a bad man who inflicted grievous damage on his party and his country." Spiro Agnew was "tendentious, unattractive and ultimately uncontrollable." Gerald Ford "had no public purpose." Jimmy Carter was "a habitual liar who modified the truth to suit his public purposes." Tip O'Neill was "mean spirited." Birch Bayh, whom he encountered as a young Indiana legislator in 1957, was "superficial and ineffective."

Ronald Reagan, he writes, was never really the same after he was shot. George Bush 41 was politically deaf and soon written off as a one-term president. Bill Clinton "was a man of the Left who disguised himself as a man of the center," and who "put a lower premium on talent in his cabinet-making than any predecessor in my experience." Al Gore, whom he first met in 1960 when his father was a senator, turned out to be "even more of a phony than I had thought." John



Crown Books

Evans, Novak, and Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney, 1991

Kerry, whom he first met in 1971, was "arrogant and pretentious." George W. Bush, whom he first met and wrote about in 1988, "at first glance . . . did not overwhelm anybody," but Novak notes approvingly that he was "the most conservative Bush I had met (I had covered his liberal grandfather, Senator Prescott Bush of Connecticut, three decades earlier)."

"I found it hard to fall in love with any presidential candidate (even John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan, both of whom I liked personally) because, as a reporter, I observed them at close range." He adds that no president, except perhaps Kennedy and Reagan, "ever entered the Oval Office with a warm feeling toward me."

Nor does he have warm feelings for most people in his own profession. He noticed the liberal bias of the press early on. He got his scoop on the anti-Communist investigation because other reporters didn't want to give the committee any publicity. He overheard the *New York Times*'s W.H. Lawrence respond to another reporter's comment that it must be unpleasant covering the 1960 campaign: "No," Lawrence said. "I think I can do Jack more good when I'm with Nixon." (I can remember, as a Kennedy supporter, reading Lawrence's stories on Nixon with glee.)

In 1972 he delivered a speech at Kenyon College attacking press bias which "marked my departure from the mainstream of Washington journalism." The bias has only gotten worse since. In the years when Novak was a newcomer to Washington, there were lots of reporters who were hard-bitten conservatives, the guys who wore fedoras at the National Press Club bar, and it was nearly universal practice to avoid stories that might undercut respect for the men who held the nation's highest offices. Vietnam and Watergate—and the kudos and fame that went to reporters like David Halberstam and Bob Woodward—changed all that.

Novak, whose reporting on Vietnam was evidently not overoptimistic, and whose reporting on Watergate was relentless, continued to go his own way. The Evans and Novak column was a journalistic innovation: It was opinionated, but every column also contained nuggets of original reporting. Curiously, no one else seems to have consistently followed the model, maybe because it requires too much gosh-darned work. Evans and Novak breakfasted and lunched with countless sources and potential sources—many of them people whose views they abhorred, and many of them people Novak seems to have disliked. They found that unproductive sources could produce a big scoop, like the 1986 story that Paul Volcker had been outvoted at the Federal Reserve.

Seldom were sources identified by name in the column, but in *The Prince of Darkness*, Novak names names. William Sullivan of J. Edgar Hoover's FBI. Senator Russell Long ("for 28 years my indispensable source"). House Ways and Means Chairman Wilbur Mills (Novak had no idea he was an alcoholic). Melvin Laird ("may have been my best congressional source ever"). Treasury Secretary Michael Blumenthal (who paints a devastating picture of Jimmy Carter). Democratic congressman Robert Matsui ("for 15 years he gave me an invaluable window into the House Democratic Caucus"). Ohio Republican chairman Bob Bennett ("political reporting means talking to

the Bob Bennetts of the world"). Jesse Helms aide John Carbaugh.

With some he cherished warm friendships: Robert Strauss, Bob McCandless (a Democrat who handled John Dean's press relations during Watergate), Daniel Patrick Moynihan, California Democratic consultant Joe Cerrell. In some cases, relations between Novak and his sources were broken off. David Stockman, until the *Atlantic* story in which he repudiated supply-side economics; Novak then considered him unreliable and never called him again. Newt Gingrich, until some tough columns on his leadership. Richard Perle, until they disagreed on Iraq. And he retaliated and retaliates fiercely against those who, in his view, lied about him or distorted his record.

His scoops include Melvin Laird's nomination as secretary of defense, Gerald Ford's nomination as vice president, the Helmut Sonnenfeldt memo advocating strengthening the Soviet Union's hold on Eastern Europe ("perhaps the most influential column I ever wrote"), Jack Kemp's nomination as vice president. We learn here for the first time that the Democratic senator who, in 1972, coined the phrase "acid, amnesty and abortion" was the late Thomas Eagleton, and that the scholar who said that a Marxist professor at the University of Maryland was incompetent was the late Jeane Kirkpatrick. And on and on.

Did Novak give favorable treatment to good sources? Sure. "Reporters—and columnists—do not attack their sources," he writes. He might have added that they often describe them in flattering terms; but looking over the list of sources, I don't see many that could not reasonably be described as politically astute or highly knowledgeable.

"We were so ravenous for exclusiveness that we were susceptible to manipulation by leaks," he writes earlier, when the Nixon White House used the column for its own purposes. Reflecting on a meeting with White House chief of staff James Baker, Novak writes, "Had I backed off in a tacit version of the mutual nonaggression pact McCandless suggested? The last possibility was no way for an independent journalist to act. It bothered me in 1982 and still troubles me today."

Evans and Novak were pioneers in multimedia journalism. They started appearing regularly on television in 1966 and for 25 years they appeared on CNN—a relationship that ended unhappily in 2005. Novak was an original regular on *The McLaughlin Group*, and readers who are still unsatisfied by the vitriol directed at John McLaughlin in Jack Germond's memoir *Fat Man in a Middle Seat* should immediately go out and buy *The Prince of Darkness*. His likes and dislikes among his fellow journalists will surprise many readers. He is fond of many liberals and praises their works; he dislikes many conservatives. THE WEEKLY STANDARD is represented both on his A list (Fred Barnes) and S list (William Kristol).

Novak was charmed by John Kennedy, whom he remembers as "the most attractive political personality that I have met, before or since: handsome, witty charismatic, and very nice to me." He is aware that few people find him charming and he seems to have a giant chip on his shoulder about not being the kind of insider found at Georgetown cocktail parties. In this respect he is quite different from the subjects of three other wonderful books on Washington journalists in whose company *The Prince of Darkness* belongs: Ronald Steel's *Walter Lippmann and the American Century*, Robert Merry's *Taking on the World: Joseph and Stewart Alsop, Guardians of the American Century*, and Katharine Graham's *Personal History*. And quite different from his partner, Rowly Evans.

It was an unlikely partnership, between a Philadelphia aristocrat who went to Yale and a small businessman's son who went to the University of Illinois, a man of graceful charm and regular giver and attender of Georgetown dinner parties, and a man who seemed profoundly uncomfortable in such settings on the few occasions when he found himself in them. Novak once threatened to quit, in 1967, when he wrote a critical column on Evans's close friend Robert Kennedy; they had a shouting match on the Sonnenfeldt memo column, which was sharply critical of Evans's friend and frequent source, Henry Kissinger. Evans told Novak he was retiring in 1990, then changed his mind; when he finally retired, in May 1993, the 30th anniversary of the column, he still kept writing occasional columns and appeared with Novak on some television programs. Novak expresses puzzlement that Evans would want to retire because work interfered with his horseback riding on his Virginia farm, and he tells us that he learned for the first time many things Evans concealed from him by reading his oral history and papers for this book.

What Novak wants to do, at 76 and after 50 years of reporting in Washington, is to keep working. In 1994 he had surgery in Los Angeles to remove a cancer from his lung on a Monday. It is exhausting just to read what he did next:

> I was released from the hospital [in Los Angeles] Thursday morning, worked on columns from my hotel room Thursday and Friday, went to the movies (*Clear and Present Danger*) Thursday night, flew back to Washington Sunday, and was at work in my office Monday, August 14, one week after surgery.

Through the fall he kept close enough attention to keep raising the number of House seats he was predicting Republicans would pick up, to the point that he was one of the few journalists to predict that year's Republican takeover. I was one of the others, writing in a *U.S. News* column in July that there was a serious possibility Republicans could capture the House, and I know how lonely I was.

As an optimist, I find many political developments depressing; as a pessimist, Novak sees them as part of a history of human folly from which he takes consolation from his conversion to Catholicism, here gracefully described. Anyone interested in politics, journalism, and the course of public events over the last 50 years who does not buy and read *The Prince of Darkness* is denying himself one of the pleasures that life on this earth very seldom offers. ♦

BCA

A Girl's Own Story

Coming of age in the polio era.

BY ERIN MONTGOMERY

Body casts, wheelchairs, and a fierce longing to overcome the ravages of a crippling virus are hardly the stuff of a carefree, happy childhood. But they were part of the everyday for Susan Richards Shreve, who made the best of her two-year stay as a patient at Warm Springs—the Georgia sanitarium founded by Franklin D. Roosevelt for the treatment and rehabilitation of "polios." The most famous polio in history, FDR would be moved by what Shreve has to say about the time she spent at his revolutionary hospital.

Warm Springs
Traces of a Childhood at FDR's Polio Haven
by Susan Richards Shreve
Houghton Mifflin, 224 pp., $24

Shreve contracted polio as a baby in Toledo. She had only residual traces of muscle on the right side of her body, especially in her leg, and was unable to walk after the virus disappeared. Thanks to her attentive mother, who "devised a military regimen of exercises to coax those muscles back to life," Shreve was able to walk again with the aid of braces and crutches. Nevertheless, an orthopedist recommended she go to Warm Springs for surgery.

And so she arrived there in 1950, the summer she turned 11—before the public testing of the Salk vaccine in 1954 would lead to the eventual closing of Warm Springs as a polio hospital. (Today, the Roosevelt Warm Springs Institute for Rehabilitation is a state-run center for victims of stroke, brain, and spinal cord injuries, and severe arthritis.)

Unfortunately, the initial surgery on Shreve's right leg would stunt its growth, leaving it two-and-a-half inches shorter than her left. She also underwent an ankle "stabilization" surgery, muscle transplant, and had her foot broken and re-formed into a straight, flat foot that is still crippled today, but flat enough for walking.

Shreve never considered herself severely handicapped, and credits that to her mother's insistence on physical therapy both before and after her years at Warm Springs. Now a mother and grandmother herself, the 68-year-old Shreve has come a long way: an English professor at George Mason University outside Washington, a former co-chair and president of the PEN/Faulkner Foundation, and the author of 13 published novels. Interestingly, it was one of Shreve's *unpublished* novels that helped form the basis of *Warm Springs*: At 18, she wrote *Wooden and Wicker*, which is loosely based on her experiences at Warm Springs, its title a nod to the old-fashioned wheelchair she rode in as a patient there. (She didn't really need a wheelchair, but in true adolescent fashion, asked for one so she wouldn't be different from the other patients.)

"Were it not for the novel I wrote in the wake of leaving, those two years in Warm Springs might have been simply among the inadvertent losses I have had in my life. But I remember the ward and the feeling of friendship in it, the smell and sound of it, and the faces of those girls," Shreve writes. *Wooden and Wicker* jogged her memory, and the result is a literary treat: an unforgettable memoir rich with extraordinary detail and a setting that comes to life.

Shreve's memoir provides a brief history of polio and its eventual eradication, considered "the first major public health success in the United States." It touches on Roosevelt's life, his own battle with polio, and his founding of Warm Springs. It is also a snapshot of the racial and social tensions that pervaded the early 1950s. But more than that, it captures the existence of a precocious, imaginative girl. As Shreve writes,

> At the heart of Warm Springs was Roosevelt's deep belief that the rehabilitation of the polios was a social problem with medical considerations rather than a medical problem first. The hospital became a community of the handicapped, living and working together to repair their lives in a beautiful setting with bright rooms and good food. It was envisioned as a place where fun was central to daily life, where people could sing and dance and talk and fall in love.

Shreve did all four with gusto. There were Warm Springs "fight songs" to keep up morale, movie nights and big holiday dinners, late-night chats with roommates, and her first love—a half-paralyzed boy named Joey Buckley who dreamed of playing football at the University of Alabama. Good times abounded at Warm Springs, but interspersed among them are candid proclamations of desire—to live as ordinary a life as possible; homesickness; loneliness; and guilt—the latter emotion infusing Shreve's young life more than any other. She feels guilt for not being "as sick" as the other patients (her roommate Caroline is in a body cast) as well as guilt for "always getting sick" and disrupting the lives of her parents and her younger brother:

> I was a *bad* child. That was my perception of myself. I remember reading once about the strange attractor, a star that unsettles the planetary balance, which was the role I seemed to play in our family life. For one, I was always getting sick. And not just a little sick, either, in those days when most of the penicillin had been sent overseas for the soldiers. I was at the center of my parents' world and had every reason to trust their love, but I also knew that my life had stood in the way of theirs. I felt accountable, as if my illness were premeditated. As if I intended

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Bettmann / Corbis

President-elect Roosevelt's 51st birthday, Warm Springs, 1933

to make things difficult, or had too little moral strength to resist.

She missed her parents, especially her loving and glamorous mother who visited as often as she could, and her best friend back in Washington, Harold Ickes. Ickes was her classmate at Sidwell Friends—a private school known for its strong academic curriculum, Quaker values, and willingness to accept handicapped students—and the son of FDR's secretary of the interior; he would, of course, grow up to become Bill Clinton's deputy White House chief of staff. One might think that Shreve, who came of age in the high-powered political nucleus of Washington, is name-dropping here, but she's not: As a child dealing with the effects of polio, she was genuinely enthralled by the fact that her best friend's father was an FDR confidant. Shreve never met Roosevelt but, as she explains, this "was [her] effort to establish a personal connection to Roosevelt." *Warm Springs* is imbued with an unwavering respect for "Dr. Roosevelt," who set an example with his "drive to excel, a refusal to quit in the face of extraordinary odds, a determination to go forward and never look back, and a lack of evident self-pity"—qualities, she believed, that all patients at Warm Springs shared.

When not alone with her thoughts, Shreve filled each day at Warm Springs with activities and adventures: "As a child growing up in the years of birthday parties and sleepovers and exclusive clubs of girls, I must have come to the self-protective decision that in case I wasn't going to be invited to the party, then I would have the party myself." Shreve was a combination of mischief and maturity, of carelessness and compassion. While half her day at Warm Springs might be spent avoiding tutoring sessions or sneaking into the Boys' Ward to plan wheelchair races with Joey Buckley, the other half was spent trying to be a "good girl"—pleasing the adults in the hospital and adhering to what she called her "Florence Nightingale routine of good works," delivering mail, emptying bed pans, helping the nurses care for sick babies in the Babies' Ward, and converting to Catholicism with the help of the resident priest, Father James.

Shreve is a first-rate storyteller, moving easily from brooding passages to laugh-out-loud accounts of her hospital shenanigans, such as the time she paid a visit to the Boys' Ward wearing her sanitary belt as a necklace. There is also the story of another, more reckless, stunt that would lead to Shreve's dismissal from the hospital.

Shreve also takes time to reflect on her road to becoming a writer, claiming that her decision was made years after she left Warm Springs. But her writer's imagination clearly first took flight at Warm Springs, and partly as a result of the time she had on her hands: "Waiting was a condition of our lives, especially during the weeks after surgery. There was nothing to do. . . . In those long weeks of waiting I had hours of white space to fill. . . . I filled the white space. . . . I had stories and stories and stories as a gift from those months of waiting." ♦

Mencken Slept Here

Has Baltimore forgotten the Sage of Baltimore?

BY GARIN HOVANNISIAN

For the first half of the 20th century, an ordinary row house in a quiet Baltimore neighborhood was the castle of American intellectual culture. From its book-lined second-story office, the man on the throne canonized F. Scott Fitzgerald and James Joyce, paralyzed perceptions of Franklin D. Roosevelt, swayed Clarence Darrow to the defense of a young biology teacher, and clanged out more than 10 million of the juiciest words to pass through an American typewriter.

At 1524 Hollins Street, H.L. Mencken commanded the thunder and lightning of his era.

Overlooking placid Union Square, the three-story Italianate house is not exactly distinctive. Unlike the lairs of many literary types, the Mencken family home is identical to its neighbors left and right, and blends casually into the brick-lined tradition of its block. Though he dined and dueled with the finest, the Holy Terror was most at peace in this modest habitat of intellect and family, where he spent the great majority of his life. Yet to the outsider, the Hollins Street home has neither charm nor magic to speak of; these are values secreted only by recollections of the citizen-king who reigned inside.

On the ground floor of home, as of personality, a small parlor with a grand piano hosted Mencken's Saturday Night Club, a regular event that attracted a set of bachelors with personal devotion to classical music and public enthusiasm for beer and brotherhood. At the office on the second story, the social creature morphed into an intellectual and polemicist; with a flair for freedom and stampeding prose, he governed the tides of influence of American political and literary culture. And in his bedroom at the top, Mencken retired to sleep. It was in this bedroom, too, that he surrendered his angel, with this famous valediction as his final mischief: "If, after I depart this vale, you ever remember me and have thought to please my ghost, forgive some sinner and wink your eye at some homely girl."

Time & Life Pictures / Getty Images

1524 Hollins Street

Yet it was not the house, but rather its green and roomy garden that accommodated the laboratory for young Mencken's childhood experiments. In that "strange, wild land of endless discoveries and enchantments," Henry's imagination pursued new refinements in the troublemaking and rogueries of boyhood. Years later, as an adult, Mencken built a sundial, a pergola, and the beginnings of a brick wall. Set into the wall, and still surviving, are tiles chiseled from the creator's personality, like the death mask of Beethoven and the founding notes of the Fifth Symphony. In his final season of life, Mencken frequently withdrew to that very same garden with his nostalgia and cigar: "It is as much a part of me," he wrote, "as my two hands."

When H.L. Mencken died in 1956, he left house and garden to his brother August who, upon his own death, bequeathed it to the University of Maryland. Thoroughly delighted by its new acquisition, Maryland used this national landmark to lodge students of sociology—which Mencken considered "the outhouse in the grove of academe"—then upgraded it into a storage facility, and finally decided to swap it with the City of Baltimore for an old police station. Under the auspices of a project called City Life Museums, Baltimore refurbished and opened the house to the public for 13 years, from 1984 until 1997, when the City Life Museums series was shut down.

Today, the Mencken House is another plot of "surplus property" owned by the city, condemned to termites and, perhaps, oblivion. The Friends of the H.L. Mencken House and the Society to Preserve Mencken's Legacy have been granted "right of entry"—which they extend, by appointment, to the general public—but for whatever reason, the city has blocked requests to revamp and reopen the house as a nonprofit museum. Even with celebrity support from the likes of Gore Vidal and Susan Sarandon—whose bonds with Mencken subsist, I suspect, largely

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because Mencken does not—the city has made no decision on the Mencken House. Eighty boxes of books and furnishings have been deposited at the Maryland Historical Society, leaving Hollins Street naked and charmless.

I discovered this recent history during a tour of the Mencken House, which was really a workshop on home improvement. Oleg Panczenko, secretary both of The Friends and The Society, guided me along the trails of its prominent leaks, the cracks in its ceilings, and the dilapidations of its floors, which brought me to a patch of paneling turned feast for termites. In the battle between Mencken and the termites, Baltimore cheered on the pests; it took city administrators nine months to authorize an extermination.

Bureaucratic incompetence explains a lot of things, but it does not quite explain Baltimore's indifference to its most famous man of letters. Aside from the Mencken Room at the Enoch Pratt Free Library, which is open only to researchers, Baltimore has no tribute to H.L. Mencken: no monument, no school, no entry in official guidebooks.

One stream of suspicion leads me to the posthumous publication of *The Diary of H.L. Mencken* (1989), which seems to have offended certain racial sensitivities. The man who published Langston Hughes, exhorted Richard Wright to produce novels, and collected death threats for condemning lynchings and segregation in Baltimore was cast as a racist not by deed or action but because, in his contemptuous remarks about Methodists, Jews, Germans, southerners, popes, peasants, the masses in general, and the full catalogue of earthly and divine creatures, he was shown to have spoken contemptuously of blacks as well.

It is a pity that Mencken should be disowned by the city to which he gave his sincere and unconditional love; there is some question whether Baltimore deserved it. Aesthetically, Baltimore was not exactly a writer's delight; in philosophy, it embarrassed the higher sophistications. And enough ghouls and gargoyles seem to have haunted it to inspire Edgar Allan Poe's first horror story, "Berenice." Yet Mencken was conscious of its defects:

> What if it be ravaged by plagues, and blistered by a villainous climate, and sprawled over endless hills, and snouted and slobbered over by innumerable hordes of blue-nosed Puritans? Go to! There is yet its charm. We Baltimoreans like it, enjoy it, swear by it.

The charm of Hollins Street and Baltimore is real for me, but it is real only because Mencken—with his sympathetic, contagious imagination—created it and championed it from the dust.

Granted, it's of no great use to seek in Mencken's house and hometown the patterns and habits of his soul. We can save such exercises for Twain's Hartford, Hemingway's Key West, Faulkner's Mississippi, and Johnson's London. These gentlemen harbored real affections for, and relationships with, their homes—in part, because they selected them. For Mencken, the house was a home he didn't choose—but would have chosen, given the chance. His was not the pleasure of personal design, but the comfort of heritage, a fulfillment in what was his own, a pride in a private kingdom, even as he enjoyed a kingdom of larger realms.

From childhood through old age, H.L. Mencken stored his soul at 1524 Hollins Street: "This is my home, my stomping ground, my roost," he wrote. "Here I can stretch my legs and feel at ease." It was in this modest urban dwelling that the Sage of Baltimore could be himself and reconcile the various compartments of his personality: the garden romantic, the social dragonfly, the master of letters, and, in the end, the bedridden man who must have been satisfied, after an extraordinary life, to die in the home he loved. ♦

Machine Dreams

The vision of the world in interwar Europe.

BY EVE TUSHNET

At the National Gallery's exhibit on Central European photography, the machinery is glamorous and the pretty women are mangled.

Foto: Modernity in Central Europe, 1918-1945 is organized in an unclosed loop, moving from one war's aftermath to the next. This smartly designed show has a definite storyline—the dreaded return of war is mirrored by the return of photomontage, the technique that creates what the curators call "the cut-and-paste world," the technique of making art from wreckage—but never feels heavy-handed. The show moves easily through surrealism, political propaganda, and design for advertising, each genre and style part of the same propulsive storyline that pushes inescapably from awe through horror to salvage.

Foto: Modernity in Central Europe, 1918-1945
National Gallery of Art
Through September 3

From the first room, the "modern" sensibility is obvious: The important lenses for viewing the world are technology, politics, and newspapers. The emphasis on confusion and reconstruction, scissored or discolored photographs, jumbled text unmoored from meaning, suggests a kind of pre-post-apocalyptic style. The use of rolls of film and cut-up photos as pieces of the work of art stems from a self-conscious focus on the *maker* of

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art as well as its subject. Religion as a means of understanding the world, or as anything more than an anthropological artifact, is almost entirely absent from the exhibit's works.

(Exceptions are one harrowing montage, Hans Bellmer's 1937 *Machine Gun(neress) in a State of Grace*, in which a mounted gun has grown lips and breasts; and perhaps the ersatz blood-and-soil mythos of Nazi propaganda.)

It's often easy to see why modernist techniques were so readily incorporated into advertising: With their sharp contrasts, sharp angles, and shocking combinations, they're designed to catch the eye amid a chaos of competing images; the use of blank space, white or dark, is especially striking. The montage technique and the free mixing of words and images allowed pictures to be more narrative, more easily able to imply a course of action rather than simply capturing a moment in time.

Machines are everywhere in this show. They can be beautiful: Eugen Wiskovsky's *Insulator* is a gorgeous flow of curves, seeming more natural than man-made, like a distilled or stripped-down nautilus. They frequently suggest awe mixed with dread: Paul Citroen's *Metropolis* is a montage of almost 200 pictures of skyscrapers and neon signs. It's both awe-inspiring and overwhelming, a towering city pressing in on the viewer, with only three tiny patches of sky remaining at the very top of the image.

Ambivalence is the most common note. Umbo's (Otto Umbehr) *The Raging Reporter*, in which Czech journalist Egon Erwin Kisch has become a kind of retro-tech cyborg with a camera for an eye, pen hands, and a typewriter heart, is both creepily Frankensteinian and wittily charming. Kisch liked the image enough to use it as the cover for the second edition of one of his books. There are archetypal man-vs.-machine battle pictures, like Max Burchartz's *Worker before Machines*, in which a small, hunched worker confronts a big, glossy, curvy machine. But the pictures are often wry or uncertain rather than hectoring, anxious rather than crusading, and sometimes exuberantly hopeful about technological advances.

National Gallery of Art

'Metropolis' (1923) by Paul Citroen

József Pécsi's 1932 *Fashion (Mrs. Pécsi)* shows two female mannequins standing and facing one another, while the artist's wife, a young woman with a sharp conspiratorial smile, leans in confidingly toward the viewer. The human is contrasted with the artificial, yes, but not dominated by it; the mannequins are eerie, but the woman is able to face away from them, ignore their faux conversation for her "real" one with the viewer.

In many of these photos, humans don't have Mrs. Pécsi's insouciance; they are reduced to insignificance by the grandeur of the technological landscape they've created. The curves of the insulator are mimicked by the sweeping curves of an outdoor café, seen from high up in Jan Lauschmann's 1932 photo. Edith Tudor-Hart's 1928 photo shot through the thick black ironwork of a Ferris wheel makes the crowds below seem faceless. It's impossible to forget the historical context, and so it's impossible to view the serried ranks of the café crowd, or the blurry masses in Karel Hájek's beehive-like *Demonstration at Charles University* (1934), without shuddering at the power of men who have lost their individuality in the mob.

Some artists tried to recapture landscape, but it's hard to do pastoral with a Leica. Albert Renger Ratzsch striking *Little Tree* (1929) depicts one spindly tree in a wrecked landscape—think *Waiting for Godot*, only without peo-

ple—but the silvery gloss of the photo and the smooth perfection of the tree make it look artificial, almost as pretty as a machine.

Kata Kálmán's political portraits do manage to make humans as interesting as machines. The exhibit's wall captions praise her for depicting workers as individuals. Although her work does skid into left-wing iconography (her workers are obviously only getting their pictures taken because they are The Workers) she always shows her subjects' eyes, catches their gaze, and in that way returns to them their subjectivity and their individuality.

This accomplishment is all the more notable given that the show's other attempts to focus on humans as individuals, rather than exemplars of political or historical categories, often rely on extreme close-ups of subjects stripped of almost all social context: portraits in which the interior life of the subject is resolutely separated from other people, from jobs and politics and culture. Stanislaw Ignacy Witkiewicz's portrait of a dejected, unsettling Arthur Rubinstein, face pressed too close to the camera, or his self-portrait behind a *film noir* shattered windowpane—this is modernism at its most introspective, and its most isolated.

Then war comes again. Surrealism, in which bodies melt into objects or twist into unrecognizable shapes, provides a fitting artistic vocabulary for 20th-century war. Perhaps the most memorable of the war photos—for their artistic merit, as well as for the extreme circumstances of their composition—are Wladyslaw Strzeminski's. Strzeminski spent much of World War II in hiding, creating makeshift darkrooms in his hideouts. The pieces here are taken from his 1945 series *To My Friends the Jews*, and contrast twisting black lines and gouts of red with small, chilling photographs of dead and dying bodies. The photos are a surrealist's Dance of Death, all starved limbs and tortured, skeletal abstractions.

It's easy to see how the curators chose the show's final photograph. It's Jindrich Marco's 1947 *Souvenir*, which depicts a couple posing in front of a jaunty painted backdrop set in front of a bombed-out building. The self-conscious contrast could be dully obvious, a cheap shot; but the photo has a light touch, perhaps because it relies on naturalistic grays rather than the harsh, high-contrast black-and-white favored by so many of the show's pictures. Moreover, the picture's self-consciou sness allows it to suggest that photography, despite its illusion of veracity, can be used to lie, and should be regarded as no more transparent and no less suspect than any other medium.

But in the end, the show's most lasting impression concerns not what we can do to photographs, but what we can do to bodies. The distortions of the body and the psyche are a recurring theme in the show—and, given our own practices, from partial-birth abortion to torture, a theme that remains relevant. The first and final rooms of the exhibit feature 1924 and 1934 variations on the same image: The German artist John Heartfield's *Fathers and Sons*. In each photomontage, Field Marshal Paul von Hindenburg stands at the front of a rank of skeletons, while at the bottom of the image lines of uniformed children with mock weapons march forward. This image is a rejection of the idea of progress; the new beauty can't overcome the old horrors. ♦

BCA

Come Back, Apu

You can take the Simpsons out of Springfield, but . . .

BY JOHN PODHORETZ

The makers of *The Simpsons Movie*—notably *Simpsons* creator Matt Groening and its Oscar-winning executive producer, James L. Brooks—have been telling the world that, for years, they refused all offers to make a motion picture version of their amazingly long-running television series. They would only do so if they got a great idea for a feature-length film.

The Simpsons Movie
Directed by David Silverman

Therefore, it is a matter of elementary logic that *The Simpsons Movie* is wonderful, since it exists solely because its creators came up with the glorious notion they were searching for. And for that reason, the world has been singing *Deo Gratias* in anticipation of its release. The series has banked a great deal of goodwill over the 18 years of its run, and Brooks and Groening are cashing in.

"I know the picture is funny," Brooks told *Entertainment Weekly* about the movie, in what seemed to be a becoming display of false modesty.

Or was it? Maybe Brooks was actually speaking in these defensive terms because he knows the truth: *The Simpsons Movie* is a depressing, demoralizing dud. It was written by no fewer than 11 people, and judging from the final product, I would guess at least eight of them were in a crummy mood the entire time.

Perhaps that's because they had to sit around thinking up jokes to match the bizarre storyline Brooks and Groening thought was so inspired: Homer Simpson pollutes the lake outside his hometown with pig poop and, in response, a psychotic administrator from the Environmental Protection Agency seals Springfield

John Podhoretz, columnist for the New York Post*, is* THE WEEKLY STANDARD*'s movie critic.*

20th Century Fox

The Simpsons

inside an impermeable glass dome. Nothing goes in and nothing comes out—no food, no potable water, nothing. And so Springfield descends into a Hobbesian state of nature.

This could have been the source for a great many funny bits, except that we don't actually get to see it happen. Instead, we follow Homer Simpson, his wife Marge, and Bart, Lisa, and Maggie, all of whom have decamped to Alaska. The decision to remove the Simpsons from Springfield is one of the more mystifying choices in a movie filled with mystifying choices, as in the unthinkable decision to give the show's greatest character, Apu of the Kwik-E-Mart, about three seconds of screen time while the annoying Comic Book Guy character pops up every 10 minutes.

The great satiric point of *The Simpsons* on television is that Springfield is all of America jammed into one small town. There's no need to go anywhere else because all of America's craziness can be found right there. Strange that the show's own creative team didn't understand that. Strange, too, that the movie spends so little time with Springfield's glorious array of memorable and amusing characters.

The movie's treatment of the Simpson family is by far its most distressing feature. Homer is really hateful here, an irredeemably awful lout until the predictable and unearned heroic finale. This narcissistic, cruel, and destructive creep brings about Springfield's ruin. This leads his fellow townspeople to come after Homer and his family with pitchforks—even setting up a gallows noose for baby Maggie, complete with pacifier. (I like sick jokes as much as the next guy, but that's really not funny in about 15,000 different ways.)

Bart Simpson is in full disgusted retreat from his loser-father, so much so that he decides he wants his well-meaning religious fanatic neighbor, Ned Flanders, to be his father. Flanders listens to him, is nice to him, makes him hot chocolate, and even takes him fishing. As they sit on the boat, Bart flinches every time Flanders approaches him. Why? Because he thinks Flanders is going to beat him up the way Homer did when the two of them went fishing. Yes, welcome to the *Dateline NBC* exposé of Homer Simpson, Child Abuser. There's even a scene in which a tearful Marge tapes over her wedding video to let Homer know she is leaving him because of his monstrous selfishness. At which point, I found myself wondering just what genius decided to let Dr. Phil direct *The Simpsons Movie*.

Groening and Brooks made a conscious decision not to duplicate the show's amazing comic density—its rat-a-tat, ten-punchlines-a-minute, you-don't-like-that-one-well-here's-another-one barrage of jokes—because they wanted *The Simpsons Movie* to work as a classically structured film. That was yet another mystifying choice.

First of all, there's no such thing as too many laughs in a crazy comedy (as *The Naked Gun*, *Airplane!*, and *There's Something About Mary*, among other films of the past few decades, prove). Second, Brooks and Groening made sure that the movie would compare unfavorably to just about every episode of the show—and there are 454 of them so far—in the risibility department. And remember, the movie is almost an hour-and-a-half long, while each TV episode runs 22 minutes.

None of this is keeping critics from talking about the movie in tones of reverence suitable to the stature of *The Simpsons* as a great American institution. That's ironically appropriate, since 90 minutes in the company of *The Simpsons Movie* feels like a 28-day involuntary commitment. ♦

"Addiction is a terrible and vicious disease. Since Lindsay transitioned to outpatient care, she has been monitored on a SCRAM bracelet and tested daily in order to support her sobriety. Throughout this period, I have received timely and accurate reports from the testing companies. Unfortunately, late yesterday, I was informed that Lindsay had relapsed. The bracelet has now been removed. She is safe, out of custody and presently receiving medical care." —Lindsay Lohan's attorney, Blair Berk, July 24

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Daily Therapeutic Schedule for Patient LOHAN, L.

Admitted: 5:56 a.m. 7/24/07

Attending Physician: NICHOLAS RIVIERA, M.D.

11:15 a.m.	PATIENT AWAKENED (Do Resuscitate)
12:00 p.m.	VISITORS (Limited to 25; no more than 5 photographers)
12:30 p.m.	BRUNCH
1:30 p.m.	VISITORS (Limited to 25; US Weekly photographer only)
2:00 p.m.	MEETING WITH MS. BERK, TALENT AGENT, PERSONAL MANAGER, SPOKESMAN, etc.
4:00 p.m.	INDIVIDUAL THERAPY SESSION WITH DR. RIVIERA
4:15 p.m.	SNACK (Nothing by mouth)
4:30 p.m.	VISITORS (Limited to 25; OK! photographer only)
5:00 p.m.	OPTIONAL NAP (Do Resuscitate)
6:00 p.m.	MEETING WITH MS. BERK, etc.
6:30 p.m.	OPTIONAL GROUP THERAPY SESSION (Photographs not permitted)
6:45 p.m.	VISITORS (Limited to 25; People and TMZ.com photographers only)
7:30 p.m.	DINNER
9:00 p.m.	FURLOUGH

END OF DAILY SCHEDULE