

press conference on the savings and loan mess. There was a *Washington Post* story analyzing the Rev. Jackson's complaints that "news media are ignoring his activities." And there was a brief news service report that the Rev's Rainbow Coalition Inc. is being sued in Washington, D.C. Superior Court by Tommy's Limousine Inc. in an attempt to collect \$14,586.36—the unpaid remnant of a \$22,317.73 bill rung up by the Rev. Jackson in the summer of 1989 when he used a limousine almost daily in pursuit of some arcane goal of his humanitarian hooey. Perhaps the Rev.

Jackson can transform that last item into good ink. Perhaps he will cite it as evidence of how he, a man of the people, is exploited by fat cat limousine operators. He has worked other such miracles in the media.

He has fraternized with America's enemies abroad. He has shaken down American businessmen for his various campaigns. He has uttered ethnic slurs that would send a lesser performer into lifetime retirement. He is a media marvel: a preacher with no church or congregation, a political leader who has held no office, and now he is a

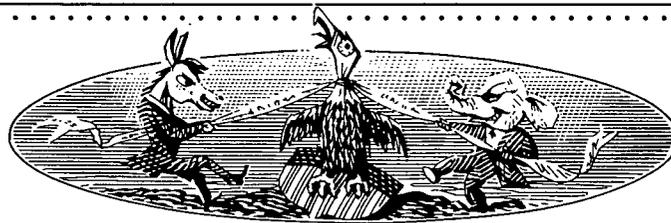
journalist, though he has no reportorial skills, no literary skills—no qualifications whatsoever to be considered a journalist.

Before heading off to interview Saddam Hussein he attempted to shake down news organizations for as much as half a million dollars to support this nonsensical foray into journalism. He settled for \$125,000. He is going to begin a talk show in the fall and that, he says, makes him a journalist. Well, then, maybe Johnny Carson and David Letterman should shove off for Baghdad and broadcast all the happy

thoughts of the amusing Mr. Hussein.

Only I doubt that Mr. Carson or Mr. Letterman would be welcome in Baghdad. The flickering career of the Rev. Jackson will now get a boost from another of America's enemies. Is it not curious how frequently America's enemies are instrumental in the Rev. Jackson's advancement? Without the press and without America's enemies, Jesse Jackson might have dropped from view long ago. If the press really has tired of him he may do so soon, and we shall have the opportunity to savor the fall of the national charlatan. □

CAPITOL IDEAS



A NEW WORLD STRUGGLING TO BE BORN

by Tom Bethell

As I write, the probability of war in the Middle East looks very high. Perhaps, in time-honored fashion, Saddam Hussein will be deposed by his own junior officers. But at this juncture it is difficult to visualize either side climbing down. What if we do go to war with Iraq? In the opinion of the more hawkish element among conservatives, such a war can be easily and swiftly won, so great is our technological advantage and so superior the training of our military. This may well be true. If by victory we mean simply the destruction of Iraq's military machine and its nuclear and chemical plants, victory can probably be easily achieved.

What is less clear is the way things will look on the day after the bombing raids. Richard Perle of the American Enterprise Institute, formerly an assistant secretary of defense, argues against those who worry that a U.S. attack on Iraq "would forever alienate the Arab world." To the contrary, he wrote recently, the Arab world is "far more likely to despise us for failing to destroy Saddam Hussein's military power." Perhaps it all depends on how you define the Arab world. If the phrase refers merely to heads of state, then Perle probably has a point. We do enjoy the support of a number of Arab rulers, some of them no less ruthless than Saddam Hussein himself; one or two of them would love to see their rival Hussein destroyed.

Tom Bethell is The American Spectator's Washington correspondent.

To what extent the "Arab street" would rejoice at the bombing of Baghdad is another matter, of course. My own suspicion is that the festivities in Damascus and Cairo would last for no more than a few hours before the Arab world began to see the U.S. as rather more intrusive and threatening to its interests than Saddam Hussein ever was. But, as I say, war does look likely, so maybe we will have a chance to see who's right here. (A look at my earlier columns shows that I have been wrong in the past, e.g., criticizing an excessively amiable President Reagan for signing pointless arms control agreements, thereby signaling "weakness" to Gorbachev. Amiability worked, it now seems.)

On September 17, the Air Force chief of staff, General Michael J. Dugan, was fired for speaking out on the record about the probable course of U.S. military action against Iraq: "The cutting edge would be in downtown Baghdad," and so on. By all accounts, Gen. Dugan was fired for candor, not for making up his own policy. Of particular interest was the following comment, reported by the *Washington Post*. Having identified three "culturally very important" sites in Iraq—possibly religious centers—that American bombers would avoid, Dugan added: "We're not mad at the Iraqi people, and when this is all over we don't want the Iraqi people to be mad at us and the rest of

the allies we've brought together."

Are Americans naive or what? Comment in recent weeks really has been tinged with the suggestion that the Arab world will, on the whole, be grateful to the "international community" (that's us, folks) for punishing the aggressor, restoring the legitimate emir, and upholding the Wilsonian principles of stability, order, and the sanctity of national borders. Warning to American conservatives: they won't feel any such gratitude—even if we display cultural sensitivity and leave two or three of their more highly valued mosques unscathed. Sure, King Fahd of Saudi Arabia will heave a sigh of relief. And Hafez el Assad of Syria will be grateful if we finish off his enemy and rival. Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, having thrown in his lot with the Western powers, will, at least for a short time, feel reassured that he joined the winning side. But Mubarak is in power courtesy of the Egyptian army. How will the Egyptian people feel about bombing raids in Iraq?

The serene confidence of some conservatives has been nowhere more strikingly on display than in a series of *Wall Street Journal* editorials in August. Following a "short and decisive conquest of Iraq," the newspaper says, there would be a need for the permanent reform of Iraq's government, with the installation of "a new, moderate leadership" there. After the removal of Hussein, steps should be taken to ensure that "there are no further crises of this type in the Persian Gulf." (How

is such a grandiose goal to be achieved?)

To be sure, this will require "a permanent force of some power in the region." Which can be arranged: "Long after our troops come home, and we all hope it's soon," President Bush told Congress in September, "there will be a lasting role for the United States in assisting the nations of the Persian Gulf . . ." The newspaper seemed to be having second thoughts when it later suggested: "Iraq could be put under the suzerainty of an Arab leader the West and Iraqis trust." But the next day brought the following aperçu: "If we take Baghdad and install a MacArthur regency, that is the optimum." Any snags? Only minor ones. The usual foot-dragging has been detected on the other side of the Atlantic, where "messy things like wars are beneath the dignity of Europeans." On the plus side, though, Syria "will want to reconsider its position" as the player of hostage games, and Iran's Rafsanjani "will have a new reason to press for a rapprochement with the West."

I cut my ideological teeth on *Wall Street Journal* editorials, but I have to dissent from these hawkish views. The paper has long been an admirer of the carrot, but has lately emerged as even more respectful of the stick. Who knows, maybe time will prove them right. Maybe, by the time you read this, Iraq will have been pacified, the new MacArthur will be on his way to the smoldering ruins of Baghdad, and Iranians will be down on their knees, not worshipping Allah but quaking be-

fore the newly resolute Americans. But the ink was hardly dry on the *Journal's* comment about Iran's Rafsanjani when the scoundrel seemed to be pressing for rapprochement—with Iraq.

As for Syria, Assad has already been adopted as our latest ally and regional counterweight, and was swiftly awarded "non-megalomaniac"

status by Anthony Lewis of the *New York Times*. No doubt Assad will be treated as deferentially by the State Department as was Saddam Hussein until the day before he invaded Kuwait. How can one have any confidence in a foreign policy bedeviled by such incurable activism? The perennial U.S. search for "stability" abroad resembles nothing so much as an out-of-control 18-wheeler roaring down the highway,

slamming into hapless motorists and careening off first one guard rail and then the other. Secretary of State Baker strikes me as an empty figure, one week strutting about from one international conference to another, the next lying low as his policies come under scrutiny.

Foreign policy seems to be based on an inordinate attachment to the old European idea of the balance of power. A decade ago we discovered, no doubt

with an abundance of CIA reports and satellite photography, that there was this terrifying fundamentalist in Iran, a kind of Persian Jerry Falwell, the Ayatollah Khomeini. Reliable reports filtered back to Washington that he opposed the separation of church and state—possibly had not even heard of the idea, or of Thomas Jefferson either. Frightening! Obviously, he had to be stopped at all costs—before he spread his fanaticism through the region. Aid, subsidies, technological assistance, and Export-Import Bank credits flowed to our new regional counterweight, Saddam Hussein, who was granted "non-fanatic" status. He had his faults, but at least he wasn't a fundamentalist. He used comfortable socialist rhetoric and dressed in secular attire: our friend the Ayatollah-stopper.

U.S. Ambassador April Glaspie dropped in for deferential visits: "We have no opinion on the Arab-Arab conflicts, like your border disagreement with Kuwait. . . . We have many Americans who would like to see the price go above \$25 because they come from oil-producing states." As late as July 27 the administration was pressuring Congress not to oppose a \$500 million food-aid package for Iraq, cautioning resisters that it would be a mistake to "micromanage" foreign policy.

A week later Hussein invaded Kuwait and became, almost overnight a megalomaniac Kurd-gassing oil-reserve-controlling Baghdad-bullying media-manipulating chemical-weapon-hoarding nuclear-weapon-seeking . . . monster! Suddenly, there was this very important cause we were expected to go to war for: Regional Stability. Lest we had forgotten about our "shared responsibilities," Maggie Thatcher came across the Atlantic to remind the President. And now we have made ourselves a new friend in the region, Hafez Assad. . . . How will he look next year? Don't ask. Right now we have to "isolate" the Butcher of Baghdad.

How can we have any confidence in politicians and policies that veer so erratically, shifting from alliance to enmity as unpredictably as children choosing sides in a schoolyard? Why can't we just stay home? Because of oil, we are told. Our vital interest, wrote the hawkish Karen Elliott House, is "the free flow of oil at tolerable prices." On this topic, I have more confidence in the analyses of David Henderson (also writing in the *Wall Street Journal*), and the columnists Warren Brookes and Doug Badow, who point out that Hussein posed little threat to the oil supply. He was certainly planning to sell the oil that we are now preventing from reaching the market.

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Well, we are told, we can't just give up on the "international responsibilities" that Mrs. T mentioned. Can't we? I have more confidence in the vision of America that President Reagan liked to use, the "shining city on a hill": America should influence the world by example, not by force. "George Bush's great good fortune," the thoughtful neoconservative columnist Charles Krauthammer wrote four months ago, "is that he is a man utterly incapable of vision at a time when people do not want vision and do not need it." Unfortunately, having been earlier decided for lacking it, the President got vision with a vengeance. It turned out to be a U.N. vision. His New World Order speech was dismaying precisely because it was enunciated with such gusto. Clearly he believed every word of it: "A new world that is struggling to be born, a world quite different from the one that we've known," and so on. But if the U.S., now unrestrained by the Soviets, charges ahead in pursuit of this U.N. goal of "international stability"—which is to say, U.S. taxpayers coming to the rescue of beleaguered foreign governments—it will be a disaster. This is liberal internationalism run amok.

Governments do tend to be beleaguered, because the great problem with the world today, as throughout most of this century, is leviathan government. All over the world, in the vast majority of countries, the citizenry is oppressed by predatory government, which is everywhere staffed to the bursting point by the educated classes. They have found out that it's possible to live very comfortably off the labor of their fellow men by invoking the rhetoric of either compassion or external threat. The U.N. should be perceived as a gang of governments (whose representatives live comfortable tax-free lives in New York) which has pledged to come to the rescue of beleaguered governments. This is called "international stability." What is needed in many of these countries is not stability but revolution. "A little rebellion now and then is a good thing," as Thomas Jefferson said.

Nowhere is the oppressive hand of predatory government more keenly felt than in the countries of the Arab world. For decades, almost all of them have been under the thumb of one or another tyrant. (The Kuwait regime was, it's true, one of the less oppressive.) Socialism has been tried and found impoverishing. The touted oil wealth has done little more than create welfare and enrich an indolent ruling elite who hire outsiders to do the real work.

Without the institutions that make

the West productive—the rule of law, the freedom of contract, relatively secure private property rights—anything more than family-sized industry is difficult to achieve in the Arab world. Who you know is far more important than what you know. One is not supposed to say this, but since the end of the colonial period, during which the Middle East benefited, if inadvertently, from Western institutions,

there has been a vast, unacknowledged material decline in the Arab world, in comparison to the West. For that reason, it may well be possible for us to carry out the "surgical strikes" pressed by the military.

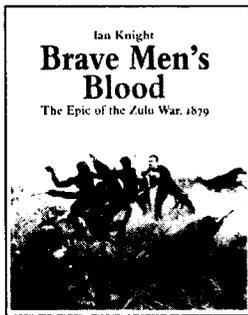
But most Arabs have been at the mercy of their own tyrants and cannot be blamed for their own subjugation. Nor do they feel inferior to the porn- and drug-infested West. In conse-

quence, they feel a rising sense of grievance and despair. Hence, I believe, the rise of Islam—a religion that appeals to people with little to lose. How will they feel if we bomb Baghdad? Will they rejoice because we taught the aggressor Hussein a lesson and restored the "legitimate government of Kuwait"? No. There will be great hatred of the West, and of the U.S. in particular. □

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P. J. O'Rourke

SHOOT THE WOUNDED

The first annual update of the Joe McCarthy Memorial New Enemies List.[®]

Well, fellow witch hunters, a lot has happened since we began our New Enemies List in July 1989. Freedom has come to Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union has shriveled as a world power, the people of Nicaragua have given Danny Ortega the Order of the Boot, and all because of us and our brave revival of the Red Scare. As a result of our noble crusade, Communists are now just another small, half-baked cult who put out an occasional newsletter (the *Washington Post*, for instance) and pester people in airports (particularly Peking's). Tailgunner Joe must have a mile-wide smile up there in heaven's AA meeting.

"But who ya gonna pick on now?" smirk the liberals, who are no smarter running with the hares in the nineties than they were hunting with the hounds in the seventies. The answer to their question of who we're going to pick on now is—they. Let's whoop on the useful idiots, the moral equivalentizers, the peace scum, the social justice hairballs, and see who sang the Marxist tune and expected us not to mind because they had the lyrics wrong. You're next, you south-ends-of-an-NEA-grant-headed-north, you.

We chose November for an E-List update because Joe McCarthy would have been eighty-two on the 14th, which also happens to be—let's hear some "woooo-woooo!" noises from West Coast conservatives who collect unicorn figurines—P. J. O'Rourke's birthday, too.

We won't be able to print all the additions to the Scroll of Fools this year, partly because of sheer volume, partly because we've already shot so many of the fish in the barrel, and partly because we've exhausted the

P. J. O'Rourke holds the Gen. Curtis LeMay Memorial Chair at The American Spectator Center for Anti-Communist Studies.

earth's supply of "Fonda Commies" puns. Although we hounded Mitch Snyder to his death—he's got a home now, and a warm one at that—we have yet to settle on fit punishment for our blacklist victims. Reader suggestions range from the bloodthirsty ("Throw them into a pit of live lawyers") to the excessively humane ("Put them out of their misery with a brick"). No doubt a happy medium will emerge.

First off, P. J. will exercise *droit du seigneur* and set a couple of burning faggots (no sniggering, please) at the feet of Satan's familiars:

- *The twig-toothing leaf-brains who spray-painted my local McDonald's with the message "Meat is Murder"—If meat is murder, does that mean eggs are rape?*

- *The freshly unemployed Neville*

Chamberlains at Nuclear Free America, who proposed replacing the Iron Curtain with a "Curtain of Peace and Freedom." I guess if you're caught trying to escape through the "Peace Curtain" you get petitioned to death. Among the various frisbee-witted individuals and organizations "who wholeheartedly endorse this proposal" are:

- *International Philosophers for Prevention of Nuclear Omnicide*: I am not kidding.

- *Nevada Desert Experience*: I am still not kidding.

- *Center on War and the Child*
- *International Peace Academy*
- *Lawyers Alliance for Nuclear Arms Control*: Quick, which is worse, lawyers or nuclear winter?

- *Albert Einstein International Academy Foundations*: After the guy who gave us the mushroom cloud.

- *Hungarian Reform Federation*: No wonder it took them so long to reform

Hungary . . . they were in the wrong country.

Coretta Scott King

Professionals for National Security: Which begs the question, "How do I go about joining Amateurs for International Insecurity?"

So much for the goofs, now let's turn to the goons:

- *Third World Caucus/Clergy and Laity Concerned*

This bunch sent me a press release, trying to convince me to publish the name of the "Central Park Jogger." What I'll gladly publish is the coffin measurements for the filthy little jackals who almost killed her. But let me quote, with one obvious omission, from the TWC/CALC press release:

Our national group has voted to make known its concerns regarding the increase [sic] racist collaboration between the newspapers and the so-called justice system . . .

Concerted efforts on the part of newspapers to treat people of color in an insensitive and completely different manner than which European suspects and victims are written about is criminal . . .

There are a number of cases we can refer to, but the current cases of Tawana Brawley and XXXXXXXXXXX, known to the world as the Central Park Jogger, are two cases in point. Both were found near death after being assaulted. Tawana, 16, should not have had her body exposed to the world in public. There was & is a concerted effort not to publish the name of the older European, XXXXXXXXXXX . . .

Third World Caucus/Clergy and Laity Concerned's address is 198 Broadway, New York, New York 10038, and I am sure they would appreciate suggestions on where to place their future press releases.

Next on my personal Enemies List are:

- *Conservative Democrats*: Because they're always getting caught in bed with Ted Kennedy and telling us, "it's okay—we're not in love." Besides, everybody hates liberal Democrats these days. Of course, being good

