

Mr. Jean-Marie Benoist, has died of stomach cancer. He was 48 and a treasured friend of this magazine.

• Former President Jimmy Carter continues to amaze. Late in the month in Oslo, Norway, at a conference sponsored by the Elie Wiesel Foundation

for Humanity, the insufferable twit chided the Western democracies for their "personalized hatred" of Mr. Saddam Hussein and for adding him to a historic list of enemies "stripped of any redeeming human characteristics." A few days later, the Rev. Jackson an-

nounced immediate plans to fly to Baghdad to interview the unfortunate Mr. Hussein. Meanwhile, Mr. Hussein continued to round up Western civilians and incarcerate them at Iraqi sites likely to be attacked in the event of war. He also forced Western children to par-

ticipate in propaganda films with him. Viewed a certain way these are acts of peace and humanity, and certainly all Americans can be grateful that Mr. Carter has the leisure time to view them far away from the lusty swales of our nation's capital. —RET

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

Micah Milhous Morrison

Micah Morrison's article "Environmental Gore" (*TAS*, August 1990) took me back to the late '60s and the Nixonian paranoia that pervaded the right. Like Nixon, Morrison uses the eccentricities of the fringe elements to denigrate an entire movement. By equating the aborted actions of Earth-Firsters or the alleged enthusiasm for AIDS of "some Deep Ecologists" with the Green Revolution, he is trafficking in the same sensationalist innuendo Nixon used in his attempts to squelch the anti-war movement.

Mr. Morrison's paranoia is further demonstrated when he states that "Greenpeace and the Rainforest Action Network do little to hide their larger agenda of overturning the real culprit in environmental carnage, industrial capitalism." Overturning industrial capitalism is not the aim, nor has it ever been, of any major Environmental Group. Rather, it is the raising of the consciousness of industrial capitalism and making it take responsibility for its actions. The sale of chemical pesticides (whose use is outlawed in the U.S.) by Dupont and other manufacturers to Third World nations demonstrates a total lack of corporate consciousness and responsibility in the pursuit of profit. Bringing this behavior under public scrutiny is the aim of us environmentalists, as any informed journalist well knows.

That Mr. Morrison has swallowed the corporate scam hook, line, and image is demonstrated by his stated belief that "not only has the corporate world jumped on the ecological bandwagon, but Bush will be making a mighty effort to remind voters that he is the environmental President."

The recent marketing binge regarding "degradable" trash bags is evidence superlative of the real motives of the corporate world. After inundating stores with "biodegradable trash bags," manufacturers were required to take them off the shelves when it was demonstrated that they were little better than their non-biodegradable counterparts. Soon afterwards, a spokesman for Mobil Chemical Company, manufacturer of Hefty trash bags, stated that "degradability is just a marketing

tool." The corporate world jumped on the bandwagon, when marketing wizards saw polls showing a great majority of Americans put environmental quality at the top of their priorities list for the '90s. Simple greed, Mr. Morrison, not concern for our environment, motivates corporations.

As for Mr. Bush being the environmental President, actions give a far clearer understanding of his real loyalties than reading his lips. Mr. Bush has come foursquare behind the oil industry in his advocacy of Offshore Drilling, even in the face of polls and initiatives on both coasts, indicating that the great majority of citizens favor a complete ban on any further drilling. Seventy percent of Californians recently voted to stop all offshore exploration for oil, yet Bush continues to call for it in the Santa Barbara Channel.

In his enthusiasm to de-green Senator Al Gore, Micah aimed his partisan weapon not only at Gore but also at the Environmental Movement, *per se*. Obviously duped by corporate flimflam and fitted with blinders, Mr. Morrison set out on this safari with a gun loaded with innuendo, buzz words, and misrepresentation, not to mention a round or two of Nixonian paranoia.

—Bob Joslin
Whitefish, Montana

Micah Morrison hit the bullseye. As a former Tennessean, I have followed the politics of the Gore family for years. Albert Gore, Sr. lost his seat in the U.S. Senate when his connections with the Eastern liberal establishment became more important to him than his Tennessee constituency. Similarly, Albert Gore, Jr. is just as liberal as his father, perhaps even more so. In the 1988 presidential primaries, Albert Gore, Jr. recognized this and made rather obvious attempts to "run away from his record." His ploy became so obvious that even his fellow dwarves were calling the matter to his attention. I believe it was Richard Gephardt who said during the campaign: "Al Gore keeps tripping over his own record."

—Jim Larkins
Austin, Texas

T. E. vs. R. J.

R. J. Stove's review of a recent biography of Richard Aldington was very disappointing because it unequivocally endorsed Aldington's spiteful contempt for T. E. Lawrence (*TAS*, August 1990).

Mr. Stove repeats the oft-told account that Aldington's scathing biography of Lawrence received a chilly reception from the "British establishment," despite the fact that "no one could convincingly dispute the truth of Aldington's findings. He had done his research too well."

I hope Mr. Stove has occasion to consult Jeremy Wilson's new biography of Lawrence. In it, Mr. Wilson writes that "Lawrence was not as Aldington claimed, a habitual liar, and [the] *Seven Pillars* is remarkably accurate on questions of fact. Those who had wished in the 1950s to show that Lawrence was pathologically dishonest hoped that the contemporary documents would eventually demonstrate that they were right. In the event, the documents have done exactly the opposite." Mr. Wilson also describes Aldington as an embittered expatriate who believed that if he could destroy Lawrence's reputation this would deeply wound the British establishment. Shouldn't Mr. Stove have treated these matters?

—Anthony Cavender
Houston, Texas

R. J. Stove replies:

Though I haven't yet read Jeremy Wilson's biography (not having been able to obtain a copy by the deadline date for my review), Mr. Cavender's extract fails to address the issues that Aldington raised. Like the denunciations which greeted Aldington's book in 1955, it insists on playing the man rather than playing the ball. You can't dispose of someone's biographical credibility by calling him an expatriate. As for Aldington's alleged embitterment, those who actually saw him on a regular basis during his later years were struck mainly by his singular freedom from bitterness, both before and after *Lawrence of Arabia*. We should not forget that Aldington began as a Lawrence supporter.

Nevertheless, I am grateful to Mr. Cavender for alerting me to the Wilson

work's claims, and shall be interested to learn how Mr. Wilson copes when he comes to explain the Lawrence Bureau's behavior towards Aldington. If Aldington's account was indeed fallacious, why did it scare the hell out of Lawrence's admirers? Surely the appropriate response would have been either to ignore it or to laugh it away. In fact, the Lawrence Bureau tried desperately to prevent publication altogether. This is a strange way of behaving towards a fraudulent book. It is much more plausible as a response to an accurate one.

Lawrence himself, incidentally, told Bernard Shaw that *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* "was an effort to make history an imaginative thing." He produced several versions of *Seven Pillars*: these differ not only from each other but from the *Secret Dispatches* on the same subject. When Lawrence himself created wholesale confusion about his achievements, is it surprising that Aldington eventually refused to take him at his word?

Kasten Doubts

I have no problems with the underlying principles expressed in Senator Robert W. Kasten's article "Moynihan and the Conservatives" (*TAS*, August 1990), but I fail to understand his concern for some folks having to pay twice in any privatization scenario. Without privatization and with no change in payroll taxes, a lot of folks will pay twice, even if Social Security immediately moves to a pay-as-you-go rate of taxation.

Unless I have missed something, the excess dollars presently flowing into the "Trust Fund" are "invested" in the safest securities in the world: U.S. government securities. The invested cash, now in the general fund, is used for general government expenditures, thus making the difference between government receipts and expenditures, The Deficit, appear much smaller than it really is.

As for Social Security, its manager looks at his balance sheet and sees a nice portfolio of Government Securities earning interest and says "all is well." The immediate problem is that since the government makes nothing and therefore creates no wealth, the in-

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EDITORIALS



THE BUSH RESOLVE

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

George Bush has just completed an act of presidential leadership surpassing any similar effort by an American President in recent times—though only with modern technology could such leadership be imagined, and the fact that there is now no Cold War helped. He has marshaled practically the entire world against an Arab Mussolini, and he did it in a matter of days. He did it without indulging in vain-glorious boasts or blood-chilling roars. Perhaps it is time for the commentators to analyze the origin and nature of this deft and knowledgeable leader.

For more than a decade the majority of political commentators have been either misconstruing the character of White House leadership or ignoring it. Ronald Reagan has been repeatedly presented as a blunderer, albeit the luckiest blunderer since Grover Cleveland. George Bush has been portrayed more variously as a “wimp,” “Mr. Résumé,” a “lapdog,” a “befuddled liberal,” a “nefarious conservative.” For some reason he inspires even more stupidity than Ronald Reagan.

At any rate, without warning and just as Washington was taking its summer siesta, the President was presented with a provocation 6,000 miles away that many American politicians would have sent to the United Nations for extended negotiation. The moralistic dithering of the Carter Administration would only have ended when Iraq had rolled over Saudi Arabia, and there are plenty of Machiavels in Congress today who would act no more decisively were they in the Oval Office.

Bush is cut from a different cloth. He immediately saw that Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait menaced our vital interests, and he took decisive action. Perhaps even more interestingly he has managed an enormous number of variables. In but a couple of days he gathered intelligence reports and reports of military capabilities. He briefed allies, often personally. He coordinated

vast military moves worldwide, addressed the concerns of different Arab leaders, and paid his respects to the conventions and interests of the members of the United Nations. Aided by Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney, he acts as his own Secretary of State. Almost overnight a huge expeditionary force composed of perhaps half a dozen nationalities was headed to the scene of aggression. That is what Churchill would call “action this day.”

Now we are hearing a gratuitous undercurrent of foreboding from the pundits: “Oh, it's not going to be easy. . . . Oh, how we botched things with Saddam Hussein six months ago. . . .” These Weisenheimers are playing on the weird pessimism that has afflicted our fellow Americans through what have obviously been some of the most benign years of American history. Imagine the United States and the Soviet Union being in



accord over the fate of Saddam Hussein, who until just the other day was a Soviet client? Imagine Syrian forces sharing our goals and maneuvering on the Iraqi border! Six months ago all this would have been unthinkable.

Of course, President Bush's stupendous achievement would not have been possible without the assistance of Saddam Hussein. Had this model tyrant not been oblivious to the changed circumstances of the present he would not have acted in accordance with the ruthless customs of the past. When the Soviets were aiding and encouraging terror and aggression, overthrowing the legitimate government of Kuwait could have been accomplished at much less risk. And, incidentally, Iraq's justification that it acted to liberate the Kuwaiti

masses would have been a lot more compelling were Moscow still leading a Marxist-Leninist worldwide chorus.

Unfortunately, Saddam was otherwise engaged in the last days of the Cold War. He has chosen the present to act like a thug from the past. George Bush is showing him that the era of easy international terror and aggression is over. He is using the great naval power that the Reagan Administration built up during the 1980s despite withering criticism. He is sending troops into secret military installations built by us and our allies during the 1980s against just such a contingency as the present.

The vigilant statesmanship of the Reagan-Bush years is again paying off, and its core value is resolve. □

NATURE FAKERS

What exquisite timing! Saddam Hussein sends 170,000 soldiers to commandeer 9.44 percent of the world's oil resources (Kuwait) and has designs on another 25.46 percent (Saudi Arabia); and back in sleepy Seabrook, New Hampshire, a Mr. Ron Sher, speaking for the Seabrook nuclear power plant, announces that his heretofore controversial facility has just completed its reactor tests and begun to supply electricity to New England. Each month the plant will produce sufficient electricity for one million homes, eliminating the monthly consumption of 1.5 million barrels of oil.

A mere eight pounds of uranium generates energy equal to 6,000 tons of messy oil. Had we, over the past dozen years, ignored the anti-nuclear hysterics and built more nuclear power plants we could laugh off the gruesome quarrels of irritable Middle Eastern potentates. The French have recognized the prudence of going nuclear, and they now derive 75 percent of their electricity from nuclear reactors. In the 1980s they tripled their nuclear energy capacity while cutting pollutants from their electric power system by approximately 90

percent. Japan has doubled its reliance on nuclear power over the decade. During that period Americans have allowed their nuclear power industry to stagnate. Though we once led the world in nuclear development, and though 20 percent of our electricity has been safely generated by nuclear reactors during the past dozen years, not one utility during that period has sought a license to build a nuclear reactor. One hundred reactor orders have been canceled.

The same procrastination that afflicts Washington's lawmakers in addressing the budget afflicts them in addressing the nation's energy needs. Our recent economic revival would have been impossible without abundant electrical power. Between the Arab oil embargo of 1973 and 1989 our economy grew by about 50 percent. The use of electricity has grown by 54 percent. Most of this electricity has been Made in the USA. In fact 95 percent has been produced either by nuclear energy or by coal, the latter being far less benign toward the environment than nuclear energy. At the time of the 1973 oil embargo 17 percent of our electricity was supplied by oil; five percent was supplied by nuclear energy. Now our depen-

Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Post column syndicated by King Features.