



Christian View of the News



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SADDAM: ACE IN THE HOLE

"Ladies and gentlemen, **we got him.** The tyrant is a prisoner." Thus proclaimed Paul Bremer, U.S. administrator in Iraq, on the capture of Saddam Hussein in the town of Adwar, 10 miles from his ancestral home of Tikrit.

By now, you have now read and heard more than you ever wanted to know about "spider holes" and finding Saddam. However rising above the din of the 24-hour news-recyclers, *The Federalist* does have a few observations on the implications of Saddam's capture.

First, President George Bush's handling of information about this operation was a fine case-study of genuine leadership. For example, the announcement that Saddam had been captured was made in Iraq, not at the White House. Tony Blair and other Allies were given time to comment before President Bush's remarks, and the President's comments were subdued and statesmanlike.

Second, Saddam's capture demonstrates how hard it is to find a rat in a hole in a nation the size of Iraq. *The Federalist* has argued that Saddam exercised little command and control over Ba'athist terror networks because there was a direct correlation between that exercise and his risk of exposure. (The same is true for Osama bin Laden.) Thus, it took ten months to locate Saddam. His discovery is a remarkable testament to the tenacity, perseverance and professionalism of our military. (And the grace of God. - N.P.)

Third, difficulty finding Saddam certainly underscores the difficulty discovering his WMD stores. Certainly Saddam had little command and control with his loyalists, he had contact with a small circle of supporters in order to receive basic necessities - food, water and shelter. However, Saddam's biological and nuke WMD require no sustenance, and can sit underground in a few holes as inconspicuous as the one he was extracted from - undiscovered for generations. (As previously noted in *The Federalist* our sources give us reason to conclude that Saddam had the teams who buried the WMD executed - thus greatly reducing the number of individuals able to disclose the whereabouts of his WMD. There is a substantial body of intelligence supporting our position that Iraq shipped some or all of its biological and nuclear WMD stores to Syria and Lebanon's heavily fortified Bekaa Valley.)

Fourth, the media can't overestimate the psychological significance of Saddam's capture in terms of its symbolism. *The Federalist* has noted the great difficulty in winning the hearts and minds of a people who have spent the last twenty years under the bloody rule of the Butcher of Baghdad. Saddam's incarceration and the spectacle of his impending trial has lifted an enormous burden from the Iraqi people. That burden lifted manifested the moment Mr. Bremer announced his capture at the press conference, some Iraqi journalists shouted "Death to Saddam" while others who had suffered torture and/or loss of fam-

ily under Saddam, wept openly.

And a final note. Saddam, who has always ordered his loyalists to fight to the death, did not draw the pistol in his possession when confronted by American troops, opting instead to tell them, "My name is Saddam Hussein. I am the president of Iraq and I want to negotiate." (U.S. operators responded, "President Bush sends his regards.") In the end, Saddam, like all such tyrants, proved to be nothing more than a coward. - *The Federalist*, 12/15/03

UPDATE: LT. COL. ALLEN WEST

LTC Allen West was scheduled to appear before the 4th Infantry Division commanding officer Maj. Gen. Raymond Odierno to receive final word on Article 15 disciplinary action against him for intimidating an Iraqi prisoner. General Odierno agreed not to subject LTC West to a court-martial, fined him \$5,000 and approved his return to Fort Hood, Texas, where he will retire with full benefits at his present rank. . . .

We want to again say thanks to almost 135,000 of our readers who signed the Patriot Petition in support of LTC West. Consistent with our position in this matter, *The Federalist* has offered to pay LTC West's \$5,000 fine. And a final note, we think the Army should send him to interview Saddam! - *The Federalist*, 12/15/03

DEAN SAYS CAPTURE NO BIG DEAL

Democratic presidential hopeful Howard Dean on Monday brushed off the capture of former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein as meaningless to the war on terrorism and insisted anew that the war to topple him was a costly mistake.

"The capture of Saddam has not made America safer," Dean said in a speech to the Pacific Council on International Policy, a foreign policy research center in Los Angeles. "The Iraq war diverted critical intelligence and military resources, undermined diplomatic support for our fight against terror and created a new rallying cry for terrorist recruits." . . .

Sen. Joseph Lieberman of Connecticut, : "I fear that the American people will wonder if they will be safer with him as president if Howard Dean cannot understand why the capture of Saddam Hussein has made America safer." - *Atlanta Journal/Constitution*, 12/16/03

What's Inside . . .

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9/11 TERRORIST TRAINED BY SADDAM

Amid the excitement surrounding Saddam's capture, one important story did not get much attention in the United States. The (London) Telegraph headline told the tale: "Terrorist behind September 11 strike was trained by Saddam." The gist: Iraq's coalition government has uncovered documentary proof that Saddam was kept informed of the progress of Mohammed Atta, the Al Qaeda mastermind of the Sept. 11 attacks against the United States.

Tahir Jalil Habbush al-Tikriti, former head of the Iraqi Intelligence Service, sent Saddam a handwritten memo on July 1, 2001, that summarized the "work programme" Atta had undertaken in Baghdad and noted that Atta's "extraordinary effort" demonstrated his ability to lead the team that would be "responsible for attacking the targets that we have agreed to destroy."

Smoking gun, yes? - Marvin Olasky, *townhall.com*, 12/18/03

IRAQ SHOULD PAY ITS OWN WAY

At a Senate hearing to consider the Bush administration request for \$87 billion to pay for a continued U.S. presence in Iraq, the news emerged that up to \$20.3 billion of that sum is allocated, not to pay for the war or to benefit U.S. troops, but to build Iraq into a modern country with water and sewer systems, power grids, roads, bridges, schools, post offices, prisons and even 3,000 housing units.

Some senators asked the obvious question: Because Iraq has the second-largest known oil reserves in the world, why can't the Iraqis pay for its own reconstruction, as the administration promised before the war?

President Bush's representative, L. Paul Bremer III, then let the cat out of the bag. Iraq can't finance its own reconstruction, he said, because it has a debt of \$200 billion and therefore can't borrow against future oil profits. Of that \$200 billion, more than half is commercial debt owed mainly to France, Russia and Germany, and the rest is war reparations owed mainly to Kuwait from the first Gulf War. . . .

Bremer, who learned his foreign-affairs chutzpah during 11 years as managing director of Kissinger Associates Inc, cut off senatorial interrogation by asserting international law. But international law is a fiction; no legislature passed any such law and no court can enforce it.

Respecting the debts of a defunct dictator is only a custom, and that custom should be overruled by the Doctrine of Odious Debts, i.e., that a country is not responsible for a despotic regime's debts that were used for purposes contrary to the interests of the nation. The United States used this doctrine after the Spanish-American War to cancel Cuba's debts to Spain, and it should be used today because there is no justification in requiring either the Iraqi people or U.S. taxpayers to pay for Saddam's profligacy.

Repudiating Saddam's debt would teach the world an important lesson. Countries that support tyrants like Saddam with loans and investments should lose their money when the regime goes belly-up. - Phyllis Schlafly, *Conservative Chronicle*, 10/15/03

NEW EVIDENCE ON WMD'S

A former Lt. Colonel in the Iraqi Army, who apparently had been a spy for years and is now working for the Iraqi Governing Council, says that Iraq did too have weapons of mass destruction. He says he saw them, that they were designed to be launched by hand-held rockets, and were to be used only on the personal orders of Saddam Hussein.

The Colonel, whose name is al-Dabbagh, who made the revela-

tions in an interview with a reporter from the Telegraph of London, also believes he was probably the source of a controversial claim by British intelligence in September 2002 that Iraq had WMD's that could be launched within 45 minutes. Actually, he thinks it was closer to half an hour.

Al-Dabbagh apparently doesn't know whether the warheads were chemical or biological in nature, and he doesn't know what has happened to them, although he speculates that the Fedayeen probably has hidden them somewhere in Iraq. . . .

"The only reason that these weapons were not used, said Col. al-Dabbagh, was because the bulk of the Iraqi army did not want to fight for Saddam. 'The West should thank God that the Iraqi army decided not to fight,' he said."

The Telegraph further speculates that, "The American advance was so rapid that the Iraqis could only deploy chemical weapons around Baghdad: that would have killed the Iraqi civilian population - who did not have masks - but not the U.S. soldiers, who did. Even Iraqi officers loyal to Saddam Hussein balked at that." . . .

So in the end, al-Dabbagh's interview provides new evidence that there were WMD's: evidence, yes, but not conclusive proof. Still, it is a canard to believe that Bush and Blair went to war knowing that there were no WMD's, and lied to their constituencies in order to build support for their decision. Saddam had had WMD's, had used WMD's and refused to prove - as the UN demanded - that he had destroyed them.

The war was about regime change, which in turn was about two things: freeing the Iraqi people from a despicable, murderous dictatorship and striking an offensive blow in the war on terrorism. These goals have been accomplished. Repeat, have been accomplished. Bringing stability and prosperity to Iraq and winning the war on terrorism remain, but the first requirement for their success is resolve. By focusing on the red herring of WMD's, and ignoring or attempting to discredit evidence such as that provided by al-Dabbagh (as they have also done with regard to evidence of Iraqi/al-Qaeda links), politicians and media establishments who have other agendas threaten that resolve and thus expose their lack of commitment to stability in the middle east and peace in the world. - Jay Bryant, *townhall.com*, 12/13/03

THE UPSIDE OF AGING

George McDonald wrote, "Age is not all decay; it is the ripening, the swelling, of the fresh life within." Sadly, our culture doesn't have such a fond opinion of growing older.

Does the mirror determine who we are at 60, 75, or 100? The body is subject to the depredations of time, but must the inner person be as well?

The retirement years are not a time for mourning a life passed by. These years are a time of freedom. A person does not need to be defined by a job. Time can be spent with friends, children, grandchildren, in helping others, and in prayer. Your time is your own, to be used only as God sees fit.

Bodies break down over the weight of years, but other burdens melt away. Old age has a way of releasing us from caring about what other people think of us, and freeing us from the duty of living up to others' expectations.

Growing old helps us to stop taking our time on earth for granted. Wise people don't spend their later years bemoaning what might have been or their own physical deterioration. They use their time to make a positive contribution, helping others with an open heart. They are no older than they choose to be. - Libby Grandy, *Mature Living*, 6/03

in *Current Thoughts & Trends*, 8/03

GROWING OLD TOGETHER

Mike Yaconelli, well-known writer on youth ministry, has been vocal about failure in the field lately, stating, "Not youth church, or contemporary church, or postmodern church. Just plain boring, ordinary church. Yes, that's right. Church. Mostly, church is the place where we can grow old together. And it turns out that growing old together is still the best way to bring lasting results with students. Growing old together is where we teach (and learn from) each other what discipleship means in the everyday world." Yaconelli also had words about what he views as "pep rallies" for Jesus: "The radical, ugly truth? Jesus was killed by the very people who threw him a pep rally the week before." (Our teens and seniors get together occasionally for food and fellowship and to serve with and for one another. It is a spiritual blessing for all. - N.P.) - *The Baptist Bulletin*, 10/03

22 MILLION ADDICTED TO ALCOHOL OR DRUGS

Around 22 million Americans were addicted to alcohol or drugs last year, according to a federal survey designed to capture more accurate data about substance abuse.

More than 9 percent of the population aged 12 and older has a serious substance-abuse problem, Charles G. Curie, administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), said at a press conference on Sept. 5.

The most common addiction - with 14.9 million people - was alcohol. Another 3.9 million people were addicted to illegal drugs and the remainder were addicted to both drugs and alcohol. SAMHSA said in its new National Survey on Drug Use and Health. . . .

Marijuana remains the most commonly used illegal drug, with 14.6 million users, the survey found. There were also 2 million people who used cocaine and 1.2 million who used hallucinogens, including the club drug Ecstasy. . . .

Another recent survey of teens showed that drug use has persisted at a rate of around 24 percent for the last five years. - Cheryl Wetzstein, *Washington Times Weekly*, 9/15-21/03

BINGE DRINKING INTERNATIONAL IN SCOPE

According to Henry Wechsler - a Harvard researcher who last year published "Dying to Drink: Confronting Binge Drinking on College Campuses" - two of every five students at U.S. colleges regularly indulge in binge drinking.

Mr. Wechsler said such drinking is responsible for the death of about 14,000 students per year in the country - mainly from alcohol-related incidents.

In Europe, too, binge drinking is becoming more popular among young people.

In 1999, the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Drugs, conducted among about 95,000 10th-graders by the Swedish Council for Information on Alcohol and Other Drugs, found that binge drinking had increased by 21 percent between 1995 and 1999 to 55 percent in almost half of the 30 participating countries.

But while 40 percent of 10th-graders in the United States report consuming alcohol in an average 30-day period, 61 percent report doing so in Europe. However, this proportion varies among European countries, from 36 percent in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to 85 percent in Denmark.

Even in Western Europe, drinking habits differ among neighboring countries. With a pure-alcohol consumption of 9.1 quarts were

capita a year in 2000, Britons drink less than most of their neighbors, at the head of which is Luxembourg, with 12.7 quarts, followed by Ireland, at 12.2 quarts. - Delphine Soulas, *WTW*, 10/13-19/03

DRINKING MORE THAN THEY THINK

American college students are vastly under-reporting the amount of alcohol they consume. However, the students are not lying on research surveys; they simply do not know what a "standard" drink is. Researchers at Duke University Medical Center found that many undergraduate students asked to pour a standard-size drink actually poured two-and-a-half times as much, meaning that, in the words of one researcher, "students drink more than they think. . . . Survey data probably underestimate actual drinking levels on college campuses." (eurekalet.org, 11/13/03) - *What In The World*, 35/6

BRAIN DECLINE FROM LIGHT DRINKING

Low to moderate drinking may cause a loss of brain tissue in middle-aged people, a study found. The researchers also found that such alcohol consumption does not lower the risk of a stroke - contradicting findings from previous studies. "I think this is an interesting study because people talk about the beneficial effects of alcohol intake on cardiovascular disease and they try to extend that to stroke," said the study's lead researcher, Dr. Jingzhong Ding, a research associate at the Bloomberg School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore.

"Some studies find beneficial effects, but ours didn't." - *Atlanta Journal/Constitution*, 12/5/03

UPSCALE VENDORS CASH IN ON PORN

From the nasty spam that clogs your e-mail account to the XXX video rental stores that have mushroomed all over metro Atlanta, the once underground pornography industry is now very much aboveground and impossible to avoid.

And profiting from that industry now are major corporations and mainstream entertainment companies, including network TV, movie studios and book publishers. Revenues for the porn industry - about \$10 billion a year - now equal the domestic box office for all of Hollywood's major film releases.

"You're seeing a corporatization of pornography," says Blaise Cronin, professor of information services at Indiana University and a former consultant to the Justice Department on Internet pornography laws. "You have major corporations involved in the distribution, and the profits are very high." . . .

"There's been a glamorization, coupled with a relaxation of society's mores," says Tim Connelly, editor in chief of the industry newsletter *Adult Video News*. "It's permeating the culture now, particularly with young people. There's a whole generation that's grown up with MTV and video porn and girls cavorting around with musicians." . . .

"The breakdown of the wall between the pornographic industry and the mainstream industry has been going on for some time, but it's become increasingly acceptable," says Evan Lieberman, a lecturer in film studies at Emory University.

Americans spent \$465 million in 2001 screening adult PayPerView movies on their home TV sets, and most of that money goes to big media like AOL Time Warner and AT&T Broadband, Eric Schlosser writes in "Reefer Madness: Sex, Drugs and Cheap Labor in the American Black Market," much of which covers the adult entertainment industry. . . .

Adult Video News reports that rentals of hard-core videos in the United States soared from 79 million in 1985 to 759 million in 2000, an increase of almost 1,000 percent. . . .

In addition, many major hotel chains profit from adult in-room movie rentals. A 2002 report by ABC News' "Nightline" stated that adult movie rentals were available in about 1.5 million hotel rooms and accounted for 80 percent of in-room movie profits.

Another reason for the high profile of the formerly taboo is the erosion of structures that once kept porn in its place - outside the main culture - argues Robert Peters, president of the anti-porn watch-dog group Morality in Media.

"The barriers are basically gone," he says. "Obscenity laws are rarely enforced. The religious community has become a silent giant. [Television standards and practices] departments are a joke even if they exist anymore. And the sense of self-restraint is basically gone."

....

But the biggest for this shift in entertainment values is the Internet, says Emory's Lieberman. Porn certainly predates the Internet, but "the Internet has taken some of the mystique out of it," says Lieberman.

"At one time, only certain people would go to a peep show or an adult bookstore," he continues. "But now it's available to everyone and the fact that it's so available has taken away at least some of the stigma of the anti-social."

Cronin agrees that what he calls the "Web-ification of pornography" has not only increased demand, but also made the hard stuff more acceptable. "We know millions of Americans every day are looking at porn on the Web," he says. And the privacy of that experience, he adds, "may remove some of the social inhibitions." . . . - Phil Kloer, *AJC*, 8/17/03

FCC GREEN LIGHTS F-WORD ON NETWORKS

Network television no doubt will become even more vulgar after the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ruled that the use of the F-word on network television earlier this year did not violate decency rules.

The FCC rejected complaints by the Parents Television Council (PTC) and more than 200 other people who accused dozens of television stations of violating obscenity statutes in January when the word was used during the Golden Globe Awards. Bono, a singer with the rock group U2 uttered the word during the ceremony. Upon accepting an award, the artist said, "This is really, really [expletive] brilliant."

The FCC said that since the word was a fleeting and isolated remark, it didn't violate the obscenity rules. The agency said the word as Bono used it, "did not describe sexual or excretory organs or activities," the distinction the agency uses as a measuring stick.

"It's not shocking to us on the FCC decision because they are a toothless lion," Lara Mahaney, director of corporate and entertainment affairs with PTC, told The Associated Press. "They don't take indecency seriously and that's why you see it proliferating on the broadcast airwaves." - *AFA Journal*, 11-12/03

NIP/TUCK OR UP/CHUCK?

After 40 years as a TV critic, Ann Hodges of the Houston Chronicle recently retired with some warm words about television, but also some tough ones: "The creeping coarseness of TV programs has pushed much more than a litany of vulgar words into polite society. And with each September season, broadcast TV's no-nos tumble in the rush to catch cable's anything-goes. If harping on that along the way made me a blue-nose, I wear the banner proudly."

Everyone who watches more than a few minutes of television a

day has noticed the way cable TV is driving our mass culture into a morass of shock value, cashing in on voyeurism, milking the profits from sensation, perversion, ultraviolence, ultrasexuality. We are growing numb from the mental poking and prodding and ripping at our every vulnerable sensibility, our every notion of prim propriety. As a way of dragging eyeballs to the next set of commercials for yuppie consumer goods, cable-show producers hit their labs to create a bigger buzz, a riper spectacle, an addiction that craves the next gaudy high or atrocious low. In the end, what we're getting is TV designed for degenerates.

The result is a show like FX's new "black comedy" about plastic surgeons, titled "Nip/.Tuck." From the utter depravity of its sensationalism, it should be better known as "Up/Chuck." - Brent Bozell, *townhall.com*, 8/8/03

IRELAND FIRED AS HEAD OF YWCA

Six months after being named new president of Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), feminist Patricia Ireland was fired. It reportedly proved to be the "wrong platform" for her advocacy of women's issues and social justice. But Bob Knight of the Culture and Family Institute thinks the former head of the liberal National Organization for Women (NOW) was let go because "the money spigot [to YWCA] was turned off. . . when its supporters found out what they had done." He said, "If you're truly interested in young women getting a Christian experience, why would you put a bisexual, leftist feminist in charge of them?" (10/27 *AgapePress*) Many critics of the YWCA claim it has a strongly liberal leadership - and that that is what led to the hiring of Ireland in the first place. - *Calvary Contender*, 12/03

THE SHIFTING FAMILY

The American family is undergoing profound changes and has been for several decades now. Two shifts in particular stand out:

- The single parent. Since 1970, the number of single mothers has increased from 3 million in 1970 to 10 million in 2000. The reasons are many: death, divorce, or separation. But what's changing is the public perception about single parenting. The media has made single parenting seem normal and acceptable, and sometimes, even preferred over the biblical norm of a family as a mutual relationship of love and caring between a man and a woman.
- Children's needs. The media may love it, but the children don't. According to one study of 65,000 single-parent children, kids who are raised in this type of family are at increased risk for mental problems, injury, addiction, and suicide.
- Shacking up. The number of couples who live together without benefit of marriage and who have children continues to increase.

What's worse is that kids - even Christian kids - have bought into the idea that living together before marriage is ok. When asked by a Gallup survey in 2003, 70% of teens said living together is acceptable. As expected, 85% of teens who did not attend church regularly approved of premarital sex. But 50% of teens who *do* attend church regularly still approved of this arrangement, showing that the culture, rather than Scripture, dictates their attitudes on sexual behavior and family life.

What can be done about this problem? First, we must be aware of it. We must keep up with the trends. We should be sensitive to children who come from single-parent families or parents who live together outside of wedlock. And finally, we must model before our children the biblical design for marriage. -Doug West, *Youth Culture@Today*, Sum. 2003, *CTT*, 9/03

BRING BACK THE STAY-AT-HOME MOM

In a devastating new book, *Day Care Deception*, Brian C. Robertson marshals the overwhelming evidence about the risks of day care and explains why much of academia and the media try to cover it up. Any negative information about the effects of day care is considered out-of-bounds because it will upset one of liberalism's most sainted groups; working mothers, whom feminists adore as the vanguard of their assault on the "patriarchy."

The drumroll of day care's negative effects on kids includes higher rates of illness, including acute respiratory illness, ear infections and diarrhea; insecure attachment to their mothers; more aggressive behavior; and in the case of children of well-educated mothers placed in poor-quality care, slowed cognitive development.

Burton White, former director of the Harvard Preschool Project, writes, "After more than 30 years of research on how children develop well, I would not think of putting an infant or toddler of my own into any substitute-care program on a full-time basis, especially a center-based program."

White's forthrightness is rare. More typical is the surrender of the late Dr. Benjamin Spock. For years he maintained that nurseries are "no good for infants." But by the 1990s, he had dropped the advice, because it made working mothers feel guilty. "It's a cowardly thing that I did," he explained. "I just tossed it in subsequent editions." Researchers and journalists who are themselves working moms have a similar impulse. "I wanted to find that the child care was good," pro-day-care researcher Allison Clarke-Stewart has said. "I'm a working mother." . . .

According to Robertson, about half of married couple with children in the mid-1950s paid no federal income tax, thanks to a generous \$3,000 personal exemption. If this exemption had kept up with inflation, it would be \$10,000 today. The tax code's dependent-care tax credit is, perversely, only available for parents who go to licensed day-care providers, a bias in favor of commercialized care that is worse for kids than the informal care provided by grandparents and neighbors. . . .

The biggest, most important change would be for the culture to stop showering praise and adulation on working moms in order to save some for those mothers who make the personal and financial sacrifices necessary to stay at home with their young children. No group in our society is so selfless or does so much for "the children" as stay-at-home moms. But we value some contributions to children's well-being more than others. - Rich Lowery, *Conservative Chronicle*, 8/26/03

ENGLISH - OUR OFFICIAL LANGUAGE?

If 92 members of Congress have their way, Americans will soon be speaking the same official language - English. . . .

"Unfortunately, both houses of Congress have never passed it at the same time," James Lubinskas, communications director of U.S. English, explained yesterday. "So Congress has never voted against making English the official language, but they have yet to vote currently to do so. Hopefully, that will change with H.R. 997."

In February of this year, Rep. Steve King, Iowa Republican, introduced H.R. 997, the English Language Unity Act of 2003, which already has 92 co-sponsors.

"Whenever it is put to a vote, official English passes," says Mr. Mauro E. Mujica, Chairman of U.S. English. "This should be no surprise as polls show 84 percent of Americans support making English our official language." - *WTW*, 8/11-17/03

LOSING OUR HISTORY AND OUR NATION

If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, it expects what never was and never will be. - Thomas Jefferson

Bruce Cole, chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, enjoys a nice view of the Capitol dome from his office window. He is less satisfied with what he sees of America's common culture.

Mr. Cole, who taught Renaissance art for many years before undertaking a stint in government, thinks the United States is in danger of losing its national identity through a loss of historical memory. If the words Yorktown, Bleeding Kansas, Reconstruction, Ellis Island, Marbury vs. Madison, "Remember the Main," the Spirit of St. Louis, Midway, "I shall return," the Battle of the Bulge, the Hiss/Chambers case and "Ich bin ein Berliner" mean no more to most Americans than to the average Malaysian, what is it that makes us Americans?

Part of what makes America unique is that nationality arises from this shared history and from shared values and beliefs. It is not possible to become a Frenchman, a Swiss or a Russian by moving to those countries and adopting their beliefs. Nationality there is too bound up in blood, ethnicity and land. But every immigrant who arrives in the United States can become an American by adopting our beliefs.

There was a time when we had so much confidence in the superiority of our way of life that we aggressively taught our values to new immigrants and insisted they master the basics of American history, the English language and civics before being eligible for citizenship. Today we're not even teaching history to our own school-children. And we are in the grip of a truly frightening collective ignorance. As Mr. Cole warns, when you don't know your history, you're more inclined to believe the kooky versions of it served up by everyone from Oliver Stone to Michael Moore. That is why the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) is sponsoring a "We the People" initiative to improve the teaching of American history. - Mona Charen, *WTW*, 7/21-27/03

CLINTON LOST OSAMA BIN LADEN

George Bush may absorb all current heat for failing to score decisively in the global war on terror, but, in the words of author Richard Minter, Osama bin Laden "is the unfinished business of the Clinton administration."

During the Clinton years the number of Americans who fell victim to terrorist plots grew steadily and Mr. bin Laden publicly declared war on the United States at least five times. At the same time, Mr. bin Laden learned that his forces could strike prime U.S. targets - the World Trade Center, U.S. soldiers (in Somalia), U.S. warships (USS Cole), and U.S. embassies (Nairobi, Dar es Salaam) - without drawing a serious counterattack from the White House.

Mr. bin Laden progressed from "a small-time funder of militant Muslim terrorists in Sudan, Yemen, and Afghanistan" at the beginning of Mr. Clinton's term to operating a "terror network. . . in more than 55 countries and already responsible for the deaths of thousands" by 2000, Mr. Clinton's last year in office. The world-wide network by then was well along with plans for the 9/11 attacks.

It's old news that Mr. Clinton was distracted by poll readings and impeachment proceedings, leaving the war on terror to law-enforcement agencies and obscure State Department bureaucrats. But Mr. Minter, a former *Wall Street Journal* editor, has a few new things to say about the license for liberty Mr. Clinton handed al-Qaeda. Relying on intelligence documents from Sudan and a Clinton donor-turned Islamic-power-broker named Mansoor Ijaz, Mr. Minter describes too

many opportunities when the Clinton administration had Mr. bin Laden within its grasp - and refused to take him. - Mindy Belz, *WORLD*, 11/1/03

KING JAMES VERSION

Recent praise for the King James Version came from an unusual source, a secular one. British author Adam Nicolson, whose new book *God's Secretaries, The Making of the King James Bible* (HarperCollins), wrote, "With its 'thees' and 'thous' the King James Version has an immediate, almost impenetrable air of authority and seriousness. If we could hear God talk, it's almost as if He would surely sound as He does in the King James Bible." He added, "If you read these 20th Century translations, there is this tremendous sense of ordinariness." Nicolson views the translators' poetry as the version's main strength. - *The Baptist Bulletin*, 11/03 (I am currently reading "The Word of God in English" by Leland Ryken, professor of English at Wheaton College. He does not deal with the manuscript issue and is not a KJV advocate as I am. However, his attack on the "dynamic equivalent" translations which have sprung up in the last 50 years is devastating. The NIV is the most popular of these though most modern translations fall into this category. This book is a read for those interested in Bible translations. - N.P.)

CUT TAX DOLLARS FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

For years, the government-owned Corporation for Public Broadcasting and its affiliates, National Public Radio and the Public Broadcasting Service, have been the recipients of large public handouts.

Tax dollars from wealthy, middle-income and lower-income Americans have gone to subsidize programming whose audience is disproportionately upper-income.

The dollars flow to CPB and then to PBS and NPR and their member stations in the form of direct handouts as well as tax deductions for contributions made by individual viewers. In 2003, CPB received a \$363 million federal appropriation.

That's an incredible 45 percent increase in just four years!

The time has come to end the gravy train of taxpayer dollars.

When CPB was created in 1967 - before the Internet, before satellite television, before VCRs or DVDs, before cable TV with hundreds of channels - a stronger case could be made that there was a public benefit to subsidize other voices and programming. Now, with

the media explosion of the past quarter-century, there is little justification left for public subsidies. . . .

Beyond great success in marketing, PBS and NPR get generous support "from viewers like you." The late Joan Kroc, widow of McDonald's founder Ray Kroc, recently bequeathed the staggering sum of \$200 million to NPR. Surely, with this massive new amount in hand, NPR is more than capable of completely weaning itself from taxpayer dollars. - John Berthoud, *AJC*, 12/15/03

GROWING NEED FOR GIRTH CONTROL

Since 1980, the number of obese children exploded by 2 1/2 times, according to the "Report on America's Children," produced by the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Institutes of Health. Some 15 percent of Americans aged 6 to 18 are obese, compared with merely 6 percent in 1980.

A horrific one-fourth of Mexican-American children are obese, along with 22 percent of black ones.

Incidentally, "obese" doesn't mean simply overweight; in technical terms it means "downright fat."

Studies show that fat children (beyond about the age of 2) are far more likely to grow up to be fat adults. And fat adults have a far greater likelihood of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, arthritis and a huge array of other diseases.

But even as children, they suffer. What used to be called "adult-onset diabetes" has become so common in children that "adult-onset diabetes" has dropped out of use, replaced with the term "type-2."

What's to blame for this? Maybe we should instead ask "Who?" Is it the fault of a 3-year-old - or his or her 33-year-old parents? Children eat more food than ever, more junk, watch more TV, play more video games and do fewer outdoor activities. Most of this happens right at home.

The remedy for this does not require an "Idiot's Guide." Parents need to make the children eat better, limit their TV and video game time, and tell them to get out and play.

Don't think your children are oblivious to what you eat, how much you exercise or how fat you are. "Do as I say; not as I do," doesn't work. - *WTW*, 8/4-10/03

(I hope you had a wonderful Christmas. Thanks to all who sent a gift for CVN. May the New Year be filled with opportunities for all of us to grow spiritually and to serve the Lord with gladness. - N.P.)

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View of the News

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