

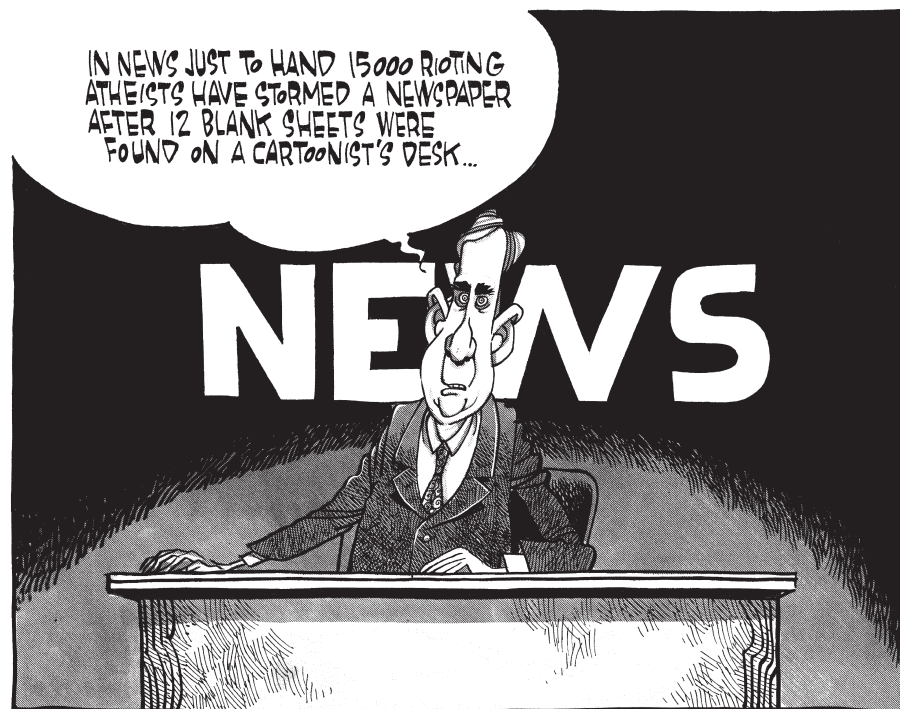
[POLITICS]

ALLEN WRENCH

The Republican cheering section at FreeRepublic.com couldn't possibly have known who they were calling a "candy a**" when they took aim at James Webb for his opposition to the Iraq War. The Naval Academy graduate was first in his class at the Marine Corps officers' school in Quantico and earned the Navy Cross, the Silver Star, two Bronze Stars, and two Purple Hearts in Vietnam. He went on to serve as President Reagan's secretary of the Navy, write six bestsellers, teach literature, win an Emmy, produce movies, and shows no signs of slowing. Last week, Webb announced that he will run as a Democrat for the Virginia Senate seat held by GOP darling George Allen.

According to Webb, the invasion of Iraq was "one of the most ill-advised and reckless actions that the US government has ever taken." Opposition to imperial adventuring along with "reinstating notions of true fairness in American society"—Webb has written that affirmative action amounts to "a permeating state-sponsored racism that is as odious as the Jim Crow laws it sought to countermand"—and "reining in the unbridled power of the Presidency" form the backbone of his campaign.

He will face an opponent in the June primary—Harris Miller, a computer entrepreneur. But *Time* is already reporting that the entry of Webb into the race will rein in Allen's presidential ambitions: "Allen had hoped to have only token opposition in his re-election bid this year, making it possible for him to also build the machinery for a 2008 presidential run. But with the charismatic Webb as a possible opponent, Allen will have to stick close to home." He will also have to be careful how he handles this unusual challenger. Webb wrote in a recent article, perhaps presciently, "The political tactic of playing



up the soldiers on the battlefield while tearing down the reputations of veterans who oppose them could eventually cost the Republicans dearly."

[STRATEGY]

SECOND THOUGHTS

Yuval Diskin, the head of Shin Bet, Israel's domestic security agency, told West Bank settlers in a recent speech that Israel might soon rue its decision to back the American invasion of Iraq. "When you dismantle a system in which there is a despot who controls his people by force, you have chaos. I'm not sure we won't miss Saddam," he said.

In Israel at least, realism about foreign policy is not a theoretical matter. Would that Diskin had found some way to get through to George W. Bush when it might have made a difference.

[JUSTICE]

SCOOTER SQUEALS?

Scooter Libby may be dusting off the "just following orders" defense. *National Journal* reports that according to court records and attorneys close to the case, Vice President Dick Cheney's former chief of staff, under indictment for concealing his role in compromising the identity of CIA officer Valerie Plame,

has testified to a federal grand jury that Cheney and other "superiors" "authorized" him to leak classified information to bolster flagging support for the war.

"Libby testified to the grand jury that he had been authorized to share parts of the NIE [National Intelligence Estimate] with journalists in the summer of 2003 as part of an effort to rebut charges then being made by former U.S. Ambassador Joseph Wilson that the Bush administration had misrepresented intelligence information to make a public case for war," *National Journal* reports.

Libby doesn't claim—not yet anyway—that his boss told him to leak Plame's identity, although the indictment does say, "Libby was advised by the Vice President of the United States that Wilson's wife worked at the Central Intelligence Agency ..."

This new information implies, however, that Libby wasn't freelancing: Cheney was an active player who didn't consider the classified seal sacrosanct and dispatched his lackey to whisper key points. Moreover, it suggests that a hefty defense fund and a cushy job at the Hudson Institute aren't sufficient to keep Scooter silent. Those who had him pegged for a reliable scapegoat may want to reconsider.

[IMMIGRATION]

MEXICO ROCKS U.S. BORDER

Late last month, Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff didn't take reports of Mexican military incursions north of the border very seriously. To news of a run-in between Hudspeth County, Texas sheriff's deputies and Mexican drug smugglers kitted out like soldiers—replete with uniforms, machine guns, and Humvees—Chertoff scoffed, "I think to create the image that somehow there is a deliberate effort by the Mexican military to cross the border would be to traffic in scare tactics." "We have a good relationship with the Mexicans," he insisted—though on the evidence, that relationship is not so good as to preclude drug smugglers from getting their hands on Vicente Fox's military gear. T.J. Bonner of the U.S. National Border Patrol Council was unsurprised by Chertoff's complaisance: "This is a guy whose time on the border can be measured in hours, not years," he told the Associated Press.

But ever so gradually, Bush's domestic security czar is starting to realize that maybe there's a problem. On Feb. 10, he acknowledged that violence along the border has more than doubled in the past fiscal year and, in Chertoff's words, "that ranges from gunshots fired across the border to rocks being thrown, sometimes flaming rocks, and let me tell you, rockings are serious."

"Rockings" are indeed serious—last month a Border Parole agent needed 25 stitches after being struck in the eye with a well-aimed stone. But, Secretary Chertoff, if rockings are serious, what about those Humvees? Hudspeth County Sheriff Arvin West doesn't believe for a minute that they were ordinary, if well-armed, smugglers. "Let's clarify that it was the Mexican military," he told the *El Paso Times*, "There's no doubt in my mind."

[JUSTICE]

PREMATURE DELIVERY

The South Dakota legislature may be about to put President Bush's rightward shift of the federal judiciary to the test. By a vote of 47 to 22, the state house passed a bill banning abortion except when necessary to save the mother's life. The intent is clear: to challenge *Roe v. Wade*.

The Indiana house followed suit, passing a bill that requires women seeking abortions to be informed that human life begins at conception. If enacted, it will be the farthest-reaching informed-consent law in the country.

Pro-lifers are taking a risk, betting on at least another Supreme Court vacancy and Bush's continued commitment to their cause. Even if Chief Justice Roberts and Justice Alito vote to reverse *Roe*, the Supreme Court would still be 5-4 in favor of reaffirming the decision.

If the 1973 ruling falls, some states will pass pro-life laws as strong as South Dakota's; many more will opt for less sweeping restrictions. If *Roe* stands, Republican court picks will have once again disappointed social conservatives. Lawmakers in Pierre are in effect asking Bush, "What's it going to be?"

[TRENDS]

SHORT STRAW

This year's CPAC straw-poll results—a barometer of who the nation's conservative activists think will be the Republican nominee in 2008—do not bode well for values voters. No social conservative made the top four. Virginia Sen. George Allen, who favors keeping first-trimester abortions legal, took pole position with 22 percent. John McCain, who in 2000 denounced leaders of the Religious Right as "agents of intolerance," followed with 20 percent. Rudy Giuliani and Condoleezza Rice, both pro-choice, were the only other contenders to reach the double digits, with 12 percent and 10 percent respectively. ■

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Denmark's Intifada

Behind the cartoon crisis lies a small country's fight for its national identity.

By Paul Belien

DENMARK IS ONE of Europe's smallest countries; it has only 5.5 million inhabitants. Until the beginning of this year it was known mainly for dairy products, butter cookies, Legos, and Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales. However, conservative Europeans had been watching Denmark for some time. Since Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen's center-right coalition came to power in 2001, Copenhagen has introduced the most sensible immigration policies in Europe.

Today, Denmark is at the center of a controversy over 12 drawings, the infamous Danish cartoons. Syria and Iran have virtually declared war on Denmark, Danish consulates and embassies have been attacked in the Middle East and Africa, and Islamic countries are officially boycotting Danish products.

Those who believe that the whole issue has to do with 12 cartoons are naïve. Denmark is being punished for its alleged Islamophobia. Its crime is not the publication of 12 drawings in *Jyllands-Posten*, a paper in the rural province of Jutland. Its crime is the staunch refusal of the Danish Vikings to allow Muslim immigrants to impose their laws upon their host country.

In 2001, the various parties of the center-right and so-called "far Right" won the Danish elections. As a consequence, Rasmussen's free-market Liberals formed a coalition with the Conservatives. The new government did not have the majority in the Folketing, the Danish Parliament, but it received the support of the Dansk Folkeparti, the populist,

anti-immigration Danish People's Party led by the housewife-turned-politician Pia Kjaersgaard.

In return for Kjaersgaard's support, but also because the two coalition parties believed it was necessary, the government introduced drastic measures to curb the influx of low-skilled immigrants from Third World countries. "There is no danger that Denmark will become a multicultural society, because this is not our goal," Rasmussen said before the elections.

The new government introduced legislation that made it harder for immigrants to enter Denmark and to acquire Danish nationality. Copenhagen began to repatriate illegal immigrants and encouraged rejected asylum seekers to leave. It implemented stricter rules to determine who should receive residence permits. It slashed social benefit payments to newcomers, allowing them only a box of bare necessities.

As a result, the number of asylum seekers in Denmark dropped from 12,100 in 2000 to 3,222 in 2004. The number of people recognized as refugees decreased from 5,159 in 2000 to 1,607 in 2004. Residence permits for family reunification dropped from 10,021 in 2000 to 4,791 in 2003. The number of people acquiring Danish nationality fell from 18,811 in 2000 to 6,583 in 2003, with Asians down from 7,844 to 1,436 and Africans from 2,371 to 312. People who wanted to become Danes had to pass a language, culture, and history test.

After the February 2005 elections, which the Labour opposition lost, Ras-

mussen formed his second Liberal-Conservative minority government. Again he could count on the support of Kjaersgaard's Dansk Folkeparti. "Our immigration policies are widely supported by the people," Rasmussen said.

The government announced that in 2006 it would curb the flow of immigrants from Third World countries even further. According to Claus Hjort Frederiksen, the minister for employment, immigrants from countries such as Somalia, Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon constitute an untenable burden on Danish welfare. "We are simply forced to adopt a new policy on immigration. The calculations of the welfare committee are terrifying and show how unsuccessful the integration of immigrants has been up to now," he said. Frederiksen announced that from this year on immigrants will only be allowed into Denmark if they have a job waiting for them. A government committee calculated that if immigration from Third World countries were blocked completely, 75 percent of the cuts needed to sustain the very generous Danish welfare system in the coming decades would not be necessary.

During the past five years the Danish government also took measures to ensure the assimilation of immigrants already present. Confronted with the fact that many young Muslims are forced into marriages and that many of them marry someone from their country of origin, a bill passed prohibiting Danish residents from bringing foreign spouses into the country unless both partners are at least 24 years of age.