



• August ended in the seasonal sneezes of millions of hay-fever sufferers, and gales of doubletalk from the presidential candidates. The Republican National Convention was held in Houston, and by comparison with the Democratic orgies of the previous month the Republicans were decorous and non-life threatening. Superb speeches were made by former President Ronald Reagan and Mr. Patrick Buchanan. Other creditable performances were put in by Vice President Dan Quayle and Housing Secretary Jack Kemp. Even President George Bush intoned forty minutes of excellent oratory in his fifty-six minute speech. But then the campaign began, and all meaning was conscientiously drained from the English language by the campaign handlers of both Mr. Bush and Boy Clinton. The pundits worry that this is going to be a campaign of historically unprecedented mudslinging. Actually, the only historic precedent likely to be set will be a new high in doubletalk.

• The esteemed *Valley News* of progressive New Hampshire reports that State Safety Services Director Kevin Monahan is complying with the wishes of his misogelastic co-workers by resigning. Mr. Monahan has been the focus of feminist anger since he accompanied his department's memo on sexual harassment with a cover letter that contained this terrifying essay into drollery: "Please rest assured that like [Safety] Commissioner [Richard] Flynn I will not tolerate any form of sexual harassment other than that levied upon me by my wife." Ha, ha, ha, Mr. Monahan; the time when the ladies of the New Hampshire Safety Service Department had to live in dread of such tasteless jokes elapsed long ago; and after Mrs. Monahan's lawyers have their way with you could you pass on her telephone number, and, perhaps, a picture? Ever more of the handicapped are gaining full participation in the rich joys of American life. On August 9, U.S. Customs officials patrolling an incoming cruise ship in West Palm Beach, Florida, discovered fifty-eight pounds of marijuana

secreted in the wheelchairs of Mr. Eugene Broadhead, 35, and Miss Dorothy Bromfield, 52, two differently abled individuals who were briskly borne to West Palm Beach's spanking new barrier-free, handicapped-accessible hoosegow.

• Unemployment dipped from 7.8 percent to 7.7 percent, and in Seymour, Wisconsin, the name of Mr. Charlie Nagreen was again hymned and hosannahed, as the patriotic sons and daughters of greater Seymour observed the 107th anniversary of the birth of the hamburger. It was in Seymour that the celebrated Mr. Nagreen introduced to the world the very first rounded, flattened, morsel of brown ground round. Broward Community College's little-known Coconut Creek campus in Broward County, Florida, observed National Condom Week in the traditional manner, with a student-sponsored Condom Carnival. There were informative demonstrations such as the occasionally quite dangerous pop-the-condom competition and the speed condom-fitting, wherein participants raced to fit condoms onto cucumbers. Mr. Jim Shelby, 21, dressed in a huge condom outfit, proclaimed himself Condom Man, thrilled many coeds—always, however, keeping a sharp eye out for any who might be suffering the Anita Hill Syndrome and in contact with a lawyer. "I was never very comfortable using or buying condoms, but now I am," declaimed Mr. Julian Samaniego, 20, looking back over the years. "It's important not to be embarrassed." Then this amazing twit went on to say that condoms "need to become part of people's fantasies, part of foreplay." How about a punch in the nose?

• In Liverpool, England, two frolicsome nurses at the Ashworth Special Hospital for the mentally unwell were sacked after hospital officials discovered that the two had amused themselves at their patients' expense by dressing up a pig's head as one of them, complete with thermometer

in mouth and catatonic trance. The nurses are appealing and have the full support of their union, which promises a work stoppage unless the management lightens up. In Walhalla, Washington, Dr. Michael F. Lee, a dentist, was ordered to pay Miss Kristy P. Lanford, 14, and her parents \$100,000 for extracting the wrong teeth. Early in the month, the tiresome Mr. Lawrence E. Walsh notified former President Ronald Reagan that the man who peacefully concluded the Cold War was not about to be indicted. In Eugene, Oregon, authorities continue to harass Mr. Raymond Chesley Delebaugh, Jr. for quieting his boisterous neighbors with six blasts from his shotgun.

• Criminologists and adepts in the psychological swamplands remain perplexed by rising numbers of incogitant criminals, despite the College Board's report of a slight improvement in last year's SAT scores. Perhaps the month's most doltish desperado was Mr. Stanley Turner Norton, who, his swank name notwithstanding, got himself arrested in Whitehall, Arkansas, for stealing a car. Two hours after making off with the vehicle he became lost and sought directions from a pedestrian, Mr. Samuel Jones. Alas, Mr. Jones was a pedestrian only because it was his car that Mr. Norton had pinched—and from the very parking lot in which their ill-starred encounter was taking place. Mr. Jones slowly and meticulously gave Mr. Norton proper directions whilst cleverly notifying the *polizia*, who quickly clapped cuffs on Turner and led him off to a condign cell. Then there was Mr. Kenneth Jeffries, 24, who having stolen \$40 from a West Haven, Connecticut, convenience store returned to purchase a pack of chewing gum, whereupon he too suffered the manacled fate of Mr. Stanley Turner Norton. And in Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania, Mr. Ivan Henry was convicted of criminal mischief and window breaking. Mr. Henry, 24, was arrested on December 15 after he broke into the home of Mr.

Edward Plowman, guzzled a carton of Mr. Plowman's chocolate milk, stripped down to his underwear, and fell asleep. Mr. Plowman is Hollidaysburg's police chief and not a particularly lenient one. Finally, the incidence of incogitant criminals is even spreading abroad, where there are no SAT tests. In London, Mr. Mark McKenna, 21, was arrested in a betting shop after an inexcusable lapse. Having frightened the shop's staff into giving him the day's takings by pretending to have a gun under his sweater, the pathetic Mr. McKenna absent-mindedly reached for the money with both hands and was soon off to the slammer.

• Troubling news continues to seep out of the Netherlands, casting still more doubt on the sanity of a people who for over a thousand years have persisted in wearing wooden shoes, drying their linen with windmills whose vast blades present a constant menace to cattle and to the country's many demented cyclists, and adulating the tulip, a useless flower that can only with difficulty be worn on the lapel and has no fragrance whatsoever. Now it transpires that the Dutch municipality of Noordoostpolder (sic) is going to provide a monthly stipend to a handicapped man for 90-minute sex sessions with a "sexual aide worker." In Amsterdam, the state tourism bureau announced plans to induce more American homosexuals to vacation in Holland because of the high disposable income earned by the American poofter and his propensity to travel and to stay awake later in the night than the banal hetero. And an alliance of environmental extremists, government bureaucrats, and Holland's surviving Christians is blocking the most sensible endeavor attempted there since the early stages of World War II. They are disrupting the plans of something called the Cargo Foundation to confer its "National Gift to the Sea." "The Gift," when finished, will be a 100-foot steel-framed figure of a man stuffed with 20,000 loaves of bread, and, if the alliance of marplots can be stifled, the great contraption will be heaved into the sea as Mr. Kees Bakker, a Gift organizer, sings of it, "an offering to the sea, in return for all we've taken from it over the years." Mr. Bakker's group has hoodwinked thousands of his countrymen into purchasing the statue's bread at \$7 a loaf—so we know that there is at least one Dutchman who knows what he is about.

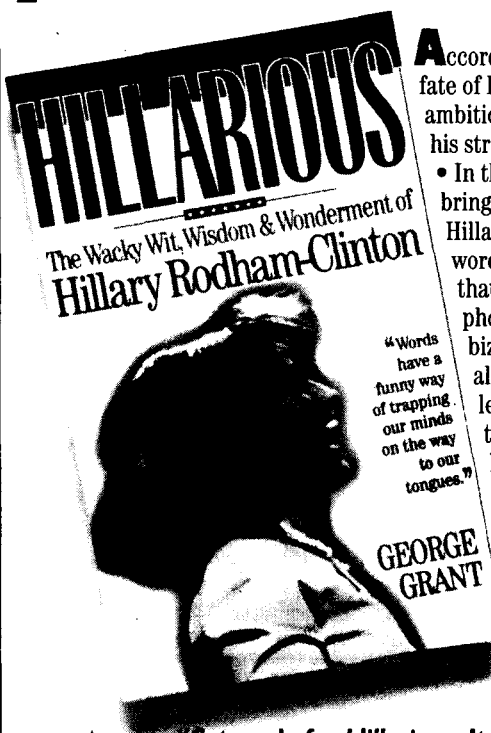
• There was scandal in August. Miss Mia Farrow accused her boyfriend-lover-house husband, Mr. Woody Allen, of committing indecencies with their children, and in Kenya Mr. Bryant Gumbel of the NBC "Today" show broke his wrist whilst pursuing a hippopotamus. From Peking there comes evidence of a relaxation in the regime's totalitarian proclivities. A 22-year-old school teacher, Mr. Liu Deshun, has been jailed for two years for punishing slothful students by

making them eat cow dung. According to the *Peking Evening News*, the undignified punishment had a deleterious affect on "the normal studying process." At Berkeley, California, local activist Miss Rosebud Abigail Denovo, 20, was shot by campus police when she attempted to commit mayhem or worse in the residence of University of California chancellor Dr. Chang-Lin Tien. Miss Denovo was a long-time reader of *Mother Jones*.

—RET

"If you vote for my husband, you get me; it's a two-for-one, blue plate special."

HILLARY RODHAM-CLINTON



"Words have a funny way of trapping our minds on the way to our tongues."

GEORGE GRANT



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TAS-01

The Hillary Backlash

Too bad Daniel Wattenberg's article on Hillary Rodham Clinton ("The Lady Macbeth of Little Rock," *TAS*, August 1992) was published after Faludi's *Backlash*: it constitutes a perfect example of the fear instilled in the hearts of some men confronted with an articulate, ambitious, and extremely intelligent woman. Wattenberg's strategy is to rely on the stereotypes used to denigrate women for hundreds of years: Hillary is wily, manipulative, shrewd, and cold. But even through Wattenberg's outrageous diatribe we see the real Hillary. She was elected by her peers to the presidency of student government at Wellesley, was an excellent student at Yale, seems to be a fine parent, and has devoted much of her life to worthy causes. I really enjoyed reading the excerpts from Hillary's writings provided with snide and derisive comments by Wattenberg. In fact, she is a much better writer than Wattenberg. She should make good use of her legal talents and sue him for slander.

—Catherine V. Scott
Doraville, Georgia

The article on Hillary Clinton . . . was so beneath the usual quality of *The American Spectator*. Very much ado about not quite nothing, but close to it. Hillary comes out as a flaky left-winger. One among many who don't have much influence because they don't have a solid grip on reality. But really! Lady Macbeth? Her husband doesn't seem to be reflecting her views very convincingly.

I would suggest that Mr. Wattenberg is as flaky on the right as she is on the left.

—Carol Richman
Seattle, Washington

Wattenberg strives valiantly to prove Hillary Clinton is no worse than Barbara Bush. Methinks the lad protests too much.

—Kenneth Maxwell
Sacramento, California

Daniel Wattenberg replies:

To Ms. Scott: If Hillary is, in fact,

"wily, manipulative, shrewd, and cold," then I guess that would explain why she's such a great lawyer. Of course, I never said she was such a great lawyer. Maybe that's why I never said that she was "wily, manipulative, shrewd, and cold."

To Ms. Richman: You mean there are so many "flaky left-wingers" eddying around Bill Clinton that the fact that he is married to one hardly deserves notice? That despite their numbers they are virtually without influence? I may be flaky, but I'm not stupid.

To Mr. Maxwell: Come again? What's the frequency, Kenneth?

Here Comes the Jury

Terry Eastland fine article ("King's Jury," *TAS*, August 1992) did something that—for reasons that baffle me—almost no one else has done up to now: argue that the Rodney King jury may have been right. It is deceptively easy to forget that the jury had to judge the defendants on *specific* counts, in accordance with the judge's legal charge to the jury, and, in order to find the defendants guilty, do so beyond a reasonable doubt. It is arrogant for anyone who didn't hear every minute of testimony and see all the evidence to condemn the trial's outcome, even as it is possible, viewing the tape, to believe that justice may not have been done.

—Thomas Letchfield
Palo Alto, California

In "King's Jury," Terry Eastland catalogues evidence seen by the jury, but not by the public because it was not reported by the media. His point is that, in light of this information, the decision of the jury was neither unreasonable nor, as commonly asserted, evidence of racial bigotry.

Those old enough to remember the egregiously racial decisions that were common prior to national civil rights reforms also recall the brevity of such deliberations. Time for one chaw of tobacky, one squirt at the cuspidor, and an agreed "String 'im up" was the defining character of the system. By contrast, the Ventura County jury absorbed seven days with their deliberations. In spite of

which, with no serious reflection, their critics instantly convicted the jury of bigotry.

—Mark Taifer
Long Beach, California

UCSD Update

I thoroughly enjoyed Edward Norden's recent article on life at the University of California, San Diego ("A Month in Paradise," *TAS*, April 1992). Unfortunately, Mr. Norden left before the campus activists got really active. Allow me to update readers on three recent highlights.

During an unusually festive "Take Back the Night" celebration in March, many of the participants chose to remove their shirts to "demystify the female breast" and "empower" themselves. They struck further blows for feminism by defacing the chancellor's door and a fraternity sign.

That same month, student resentment over proposed UC fee hikes boiled over and a chancellor's conference room was occupied by protesters for a week. Among the occupiers' demands was \$15,000 to take them to the state capital to lobby for "free" education.

During the week after the Rodney King verdict, excitement was so fevered and inchoate that I frequently saw signs advertising "Protest by the gym today at noon!"; no purpose given or needed. The most successful party was a sit-in on the highway by the campus; for two hours, the highway was blocked as students basked in the sun and in media attention. Eventually the police shooed them away.

If I sound less than respectful, it is because this was all too obviously *fun*. The true radicals were shamefully happy at having their dark delusions confirmed (by the King verdict, by fee hikes, by negative reactions to bare-breasted gynoterrorism), and everybody else was happy to have something to do. Like a lot of what passes for socially responsible activity today, these events seemed more about making memories than about making a difference.

—Patrick Tweedy
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