

Liberal Compassion

Perhaps when Al Gore speaks of “crumbs of compassion,” he is referring to the \$353 he and Tipper donated to charity in 1997 while earning \$197,729.

—TIM SHUTTERS
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Bombs Away

Just a quick question: In his “Peace Now” editorial last month, Mr. Tyrrell states that Mr. Clinton bombed three countries in April of this year, namely Yugoslavia, Iraq, and Bulgaria. Insofar as an embassy is considered “native soil,” as it were, couldn’t we say that Mr. Clinton also bombed China?

—D.R. REICH
via the Internet

Bush League

June’s lead article by Byron York just turned me off (“George’s Road to Riches”). Why in the world do a hit piece on George W. Bush, when he is the only candidate with a prayer of beating Al Gore? Who gives a care about his past deeds? No one cared about what Bill Clinton had done, and in case you haven’t noticed this corrupt politician is in the process of finishing out his second term.

Quayle, Dole, McCain, Alexander, Smith, Kasich, and Buchanan couldn’t attract fifty electoral votes between them. We all would like to have a person who exactly reflects our own views, but in the real world this isn’t possible. I am going to have to re-evaluate my continued support of your publication.

—ALAN A. ARMOUR
Estes Park, Colorado

Great article, now if you can just go dig up some superficial crap on the rest of the GOP presidential candidates you can save the Democrats the trouble. Or why don’t you do a nice little puff piece on how successful Al Gore’s VP career has been?

Between your publication and the *Weekly Standard*, it is no wonder all we have is gutless invertebrates as leaders in the halls of Congress. Is it not enough that the “mainstream media” is merely the propaganda arm of the Democratic

Party? Do you have to utterly obliterate any candidate who might appear to have a chance at winning?

Please don’t mistake me as a homer, trying to defend a local boy against outsiders. If I had my choice I would have Alan Keyes in the Oval Office, and realistically speaking I am leaning toward John McCain. But if you have a problem with G.W. Bush’s ideology, challenge his ideology. Do not scoop up this overly-sifted mud to throw at him.

—JOEL MACKEY
Euless, Texas

Mr. York’s article about G.W. Bush’s business dealings shows the utter business ineptitude of journalists in today’s America—unfortunately, even among conservative journalists! I read the article for the purpose of becoming informed about Bush’s dealings since I’d heard the whining liberals scream about them, and I thought TAS would get the story right. Boy was I disappointed! Bush’s business dealings were all aboveboard. The people who invested with Bush did so at their risk; however, they must have thought the risk worth it because they were investing with a good businessman, a man of character and ability. That wasn’t even hinted at in the article....

—MICHAEL HARLOW
Cedar Park, Texas

Why would you put that caricature of George W. on your cover? How dare you! He is a wonderful person and will make a great president. I do not like the tone of the article inside either, and it sounds like sour grapes. What is the matter? Doesn’t George subscribe to *TAS*? You may lose a lot of Texans as subscribers for this low dig. We think he is GREAT!!!!!!

—Bette Noble
Victoria, Texas

I just finished reading the June 1999 issue and as always the articles did not disappoint me. The stories on the current front-runners for the Republican presidential nomination were particularly appropriate. They cemented in my mind why I

will not vote for George W. Bush or Elizabeth Dole. Faced with a choice of them vs. Gore I will opt for a third party candidate. The Republican “leadership” has again missed a golden opportunity to concentrate on the issues instead of the personalities and will go down to defeat once again. The stakes are getting higher and higher with the foreign policy disaster, treason by current high-ranking administration officials including the president and all the domestic scandals.

All I can say to you is to keep the pressure on and let the truth go wherever it leads. Your magazine is a welcome switch from the spin in many other news sources.

—WAYNE LINGL
Palmyra, Pennsylvania

Byron York replies:

Remove the name “Bush” and consider the following scenarios:

The vice president’s son is in a financial bind; his company is failing and he urgently needs new investors. A close friend of the White House chief of staff comes to the rescue with an unusual \$1 million cash infusion. Under the terms of the investment, the \$1 million buys the chief of staff’s friend a ten percent interest in the company, even though the entire company is worth less than \$500,000. Today both the former chief of staff and the friend refuse to talk about the matter.

A few years later, the vice president’s son gets an opportunity to join a great business deal, a plan to buy a professional sports team. He invests \$500,000 in borrowed money. He then needs to pay back the loan. His biggest asset is stock in an oil company on whose board he serves. But the oil company is facing imminent rough times and falling stock prices, something the son would be expected to know because he serves on a board committee assigned to study the company’s condition. Denying that his decision was based on any inside information, the son sells the stock before it begins to fall. He sells at \$1 a share; six months later, it’s at \$1.25.

Not long after that, the son, whose father is now president, aggressively promotes—and convinces voters to support—

local tax increase to finance a new stadium for his sports franchise. He is successful, the stadium is built with taxpayer money, and the son eventually reaps an enormous personal profit—about \$15 million. Later, when running for political office, he portrays himself as a “tax cutter.”

Some readers may think that since the person in question is George W. Bush, these are not legitimate subjects for news stories. I think they’re wrong.

Liddy Dole’s Reaganite Ride

Having served as senior political appointees at the U.S. Department of Transportation during Elizabeth Dole’s tenure as Transportation Secretary during the Reagan administration, and as conservative Republicans, we feel obligated to rebut James Bovard’s scathing misrepresentation of Mrs. Dole’s record “Liddy Dole’s Regulatory Ride,” TAS, June 1999). In the interest of space, our comments are limited to the most egregious accusations.

First, Mr. Bovard alleges that “Dole fought all attempts to allow states to raise speed limits.” The fact is no bill abolishing the 55 m.p.h. speed limit could attract enough votes to pass in the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives. Even the bill sponsored by four Republican senators from western states would have retained federal control over speed limits, only letting states raise speed limits on selected roads. Secretary Dole favored a proposal similar to those offered by Republicans in Congress. The national speed limit was not repealed until Republicans took control of the House in 1995. Mrs. Dole has repeatedly spoken favorably about the repeal.

Next, Mr. Bovard charges that her “successful fight to delay raising the speed limit probably resulted in hundreds of additional auto accident fatalities.” The measure to permit states to raise speed limits on selected roads was not delayed by Elizabeth Dole and was, in fact, vetoed by President Reagan because it was attached to a pork-laden highway bill. As for increasing highway fatalities, none of the studies conducted since states actually raised speed limits has suggested that fewer people have died because speed limits went up. Several studies found modest increases in fatalities. Even a recent Cato

Institute study defending the return of speed limit authority to the states does not support Mr. Bovard’s absurd assertion.

Mr. Bovard continues his attack by claiming that an Elizabeth Dole newspaper quote somehow undercut the administration’s position and influenced the Supreme Court’s decision on the passive restraint regulation. It is preposterous to suggest that a newspaper article influenced the Supreme Court’s unanimous decision that the decision of the passive restraint standard was arbitrary and capricious. Furthermore, the article stated that she favored “market incentives” to promote airbags, contradicting Mr. Bovard’s contention that she had an aversion to free-market solutions. Somehow, he overlooked this crucial aspect of the story.

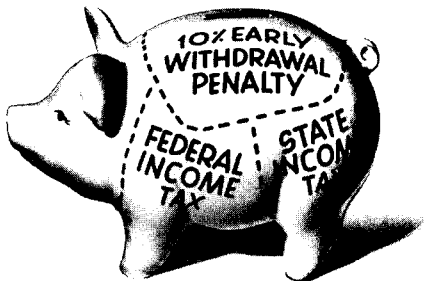
It is then alleged that “Dole displayed no curiosity about the main drawback of airbags, which is that these exploding devices can kill innocent children and smaller women.” In fact, the regulatory analysis issued by DOT in the further rule-making resulting from the Supreme Court

decision pointed out that additional lead time was required to design and test airbags for small vehicles and to reduce the potential for injuries to out-of-position children. A phase-in schedule allowed for this lead time and manufacturers were also permitted to install automatic safety belts instead of airbags if they so chose. Still, when automakers who were developing airbag technologies expressed concerns about potential injuries to children, Secretary Dole amended the regulation to allow even more development time for passenger-side airbags.

Referring to the portion of the safety standard which provided that passive restraints would not be required if states enacted seat-belt laws, Mr. Bovard concludes that “unfortunately, Dole’s bureaucratic contortions on the airbag issue led to more nuisance laws across the nation.” Mr. Bovard overlooks the fact that within the tight constraints of the Supreme Court’s decision, Secretary Dole managed to craft a substantial role for the states

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When Maddy Gets Mad

As Richard Holbrooke



inched toward confirmation as U.S. ambassador to the U.N., none other than **Madeleine Albright** launched a last minute bid to sabotage his chances. It's no secret the ambitious Holbrooke tried hard for Albright's current job. More recently, he even tried to use her old boss and mentor, former National Security Adviser **Zbigniew Brzezinski**, to undercut Albright. Though Brzezinski went easy on his former student, he became a vocal critic of the Clinton administration's inept Kosovo policy. Albright was said to be livid that Holbrooke would try to play Brzezinski against her. According to a source on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and another in the State Department, Albright declined an opportunity to defend Holbrooke on Capitol Hill in the weeks leading up to his confirmation hearings. "Holbrooke is clearly Clinton's boy, and we wanted to give her a chance to

either support or not support his nomination more so than she has in the past,"

says the Senate source. "She didn't want to speak on the subject either way, and made it clear her decision not to speak should be interpreted for what it was: a noncomment on nonsupport for the nominee."

Campaign Secrets

Hillary Clinton's Senate campaign manager in waiting, **Harold Ickes**, has quietly been searching for a campaign press secretary, but with little success. It appears one of the job's requirements would be clearing any press requests with the White House press office, which would then determine whether or not the first lady would comply with them. To handle such queries, the first lady's press office intends to bring in a temporary aide at a salary of \$45,000, according to a White House press office associate. The salary isn't the only Senate campaign-related bill U.S. taxpayers will be footing. Secret Service officials in New York were asked to assess the costs of running security details throughout the state for a period of eight months. While the New York office is still budgeting, a Treasury Department source says that already it's estimating at least six additional agents (average salary: \$90,000) will be needed to protect the first lady on the campaign trail as well as perform background checks and provide security assess-

ments at campaign and fundraising sites.

King Maker

There he goes again. CNN chatterbox, *USA Today* columnist, and Al Gore shill **Larry King** now claims that



in a luncheon conversation with the late Washington power lawyer **Edward Bennett Williams**, Williams told him how enamored he was of a certain Hillary Rodham Clinton and how he'd tried to hire her for his Williams & Connolly law firm, but that she had chosen to stay with her husband in Arkansas. There are a few problems with the story: Williams died in 1988, before the Clintons became household names, and certainly before King—a man who claims to never read books or study bios of people who might be on his shows—would have been aware of them. A former associate attorney at Williams & Connolly, who worked closely with Williams on several cases, claims that even if Hillary would have caught the firm's eye, Williams would have nixed her hiring.

"Williams was a devout Catholic and in many ways a politically conservative man," says his former law partner. "But most of all he's never hire attorneys who might bring undue attention to the firm or someone who was overly active ideologically and politically. King doesn't know what he's talking about." A CNN Washington bureau off-air reporter claims that King's Hillary thing is the talk of the office. "He seems to be always angling to get her on the air. If it isn't her, it's Al Gore or someone else in the administration. He wants to help them any way he can. It's getting kind of embarrassing."

Billy the Kid

Movie star **Billy Baldwin**,



younger brother of loud-mouthed and increasingly rotund method actor **Alec Baldwin**, recently met with House Judiciary Committee Chairman **Henry Hyde**. During impeachment hearings late last year, Alec made history when, on national TV, he called for Hyde and