



As Costly As a Cruise Missile

How much have the global travels of **Hillary Clinton** been costing taxpayers? No one is sure. And it's difficult to find out—even if you're the secretary of state. **Madeleine Albright** was surprised to



learn that when the first lady journeys overseas, it isn't the White House that pays her travel tab. On paper, Mrs. Clinton's trips are charged to the State Department, the Pentagon, and the Treasury Department. But in the end, it's State that reimburses everyone else, including the Secret Service. "Her trips run into the hundreds of thousands of dollars," says a source on the first lady's staff. "There is the travel, the security, the lodgings, Chelsea's tab if she's tagging along, as well as the costs of White House staff that accompanies her." As for Hillary's domestic travel, it's covered by Treasury and the Pentagon, all at taxpayer expense. As of early May her exploratory trips to New York had cost more than \$1 million in expenses and man-hours. "She's the first lady in a long time who has traveled exten-

sively on her own, as her own person," says the aide. "The White House has never budgeted for this amount of travel, so we have to find creative means to finance a lot of it." That means sending the bills off to various Cabinet departments. When Albright saw the tab for Clinton's recent trip to the Middle East, one of her aides called the first lady's staff to find out what was going on. Under orders, those calls were never returned.

How Lowey Can You Go?

Hillary Rodham Clinton has told several New York Democratic Party operatives that she won't inform them of her decision about a Senate run until August or early September. "The timetable doesn't suit us, but what can we do? We want her on the ballot," says one Manhattan Democratic source. Clinton is apparently concerned she misread the relationship between **Jesse Jackson** and **Al Sharpton**. In



late February Sharpton had requested a meeting with Clinton and was rebuffed by her staff on the advice of Jackson. Now Sharpton, who despite his many flaws has more influence in New York

City among black voters than Jackson, is backing Rep. **Nita Lowey** for the Senate seat. "Sharpton isn't a kingmaker," says the New York Democrat. "But he can raise money and has lots of pull in New York right now. He and Jackson hate each other and Clinton is in the middle." On the Republican side, it looks more and more that moderate Rep. **Rick Lazio** is poised to give



Mayor **Rudy Giuliani** a run for his money in the state's GOP Senate primary. Gov. **George Pataki**, a Giuliani-hater, has organized the influential Long Island Republi-

can bosses behind Lazio and has helped steer more than \$6 million into Lazio's war chest. As well, it appears that the New York Conservative Party will back Lazio, even

though it's Giuliani who has been begging party chairman **Mike Long** for the slot.

Thanks for Coming

The May 4 White House dinner in honor of Japanese

Prime Minister **Keizo Obuchi** was a twofer for President Clinton. "He wanted this to be a 'thank you' to those friends who stood by him during the impeachment scandal," says a White House staffer. In the midst of Kosovo, Littleton, and China nuke-spying, "this was the dinner Clinton felt he could afford to load up on political pay-backs." To that end, the guest list included a veritable who's who of Clinton shills, lackeys, and apologists: "Geraldo" regular and diet guru **Susan Estrich**, boyish impeachment



lawyer **Gregory Craig**, orotundish ex-Sen. **Dale Bumpers**, fierce chihuahua **Rahm Emanuel**, and Rep. **Jerrold Nadler**, whose stout appetite made up for Estrich's dainty one. *Time* magazine's **Margaret Carlson** attended on the arm of **Fred DuVal**, a special assistant to the president who dealt with impeachment issues. Which explains all that great inside sourcing she had for "The Capital Gang," or why she now equates opposition to Clinton's Kosovo policy with Clinton-hating. In all, more than 15 "special assistants to the

resident" and their dates were invited to the sit-down dinner or to take part in the re-dinner cocktail hour. "It was awkward that some staff were only there for the wine, but it was the kind of evening where the president figured my gesture would be appreciated," says the staffer.

Opportunity Costs

These can't be easy times for Vice President Al Gore. After



ting in on one of a number of "town hall" meetings in the aftermath of the Colorado high school shootings, he was overheard telling a staffer: When you have one of these national tragedies, it presents you with wonderful opportunities." And Gore isn't one to let an opportunity slip. "We're rolling the hell out of Littleton," says an aide in Gore's White House office. "The vice president sensed that this was an event that he could easily run with if the president gave him an opportunity." Clinton did, even offering his own speechwriters to help Gore craft a speech for the Littleton memorial service. Gore declined, and now he probably regrets it. A focus group hired by the DNC watched the speech on television from Denver and gave Gore failing marks. And now he's squirming and kvetching about

something else: **Charles Lewis's** Center for Public Integrity, which broke the Lincoln Bedroom scandal (among other Clinton-Gore fundraising illegalities), is said to be at work on a devastating report on Gore's fundraising activities over the past four years. The report, to be published in the late fall, has Gore's campaign advisers extremely nervous, and they are talking about having Gore go public before the report's release in an effort to defuse its explosiveness. To add new insult to his many injuries, big Al is finding Hollywood cool to his candidacy. Instead, Friends of Bill in La-La Land seem to prefer long-shooting Democratic long shot **Bill Bradley**. In the last several months, Bradley has raised almost a million dollars in California, much of it in Hollywood. Such Democratic moneymen as Disney CEO **Michael Eisner**, cable-TV impresario **Barry Diller**, and stars **Dustin Hoffman** and **Richard Dreyfuss** have helped Bradley in a town that once belonged to Clinton, if not Clinton-Gore.

Rogan's Heroes

Republicans on Capitol Hill were both surprised and—in at least one case—relieved that California Rep. **James Rogan** has decided to both leave the House and not challenge Sen. **Dianne Feinstein** next year. Rogan's plight is well known—a tough congressional district, impeachment baggage—but he isn't giving up on politics. Rogan has told associates he wants to be active in California Republican fundraising, and intends to challenge Barbara Boxer in 2004. Happiest

about Rogan's decision is Republican Congressional Campaign Committee chief **Tom Davis**, who was dreading the idea of having to hand out huge bucks to Rogan to hold on to California's 27th District. "We're surrendering that district for 2000," said an RCCC source. "The demographics aren't there and now our money won't be there either. The Dems can have it."

Rule by Yellow Ribbon

House Minority Whip **David Bonior** (D-Mich.) cut short



his participation in an Aspen Institute-sponsored trip to China when he learned that one of the three American soldiers captured by the Serbs at the start of the Kosovo war was a constituent. Bonior rushed back to Washington to monitor the situation of POW Staff Sgt. **Chris Stone**. "He called the family to let them know he'd cut off an overseas trip," says a staff member. Bonior then had his staff send out a press release announcing that he had canceled his trip because a constituent had become a POW. "The congressman just wanted to make sure everyone knew he wasn't in China. He is, after all, one of the leaders of our nation," the staffer added.

Homeboys

Speaker **Dennis Hastert** isn't going to waste a lot of time or



hot air on issues he thinks Americans aren't going to focus on, and most of his colleagues think that's a wonderful thing. Hastert and a group of Republican House members were scheduled to make a five-city road show in mid-April to discuss Social Security reform. But Hastert canceled the plans as soon as it became clear that the Kosovo "crisis" would be the main focus of news coverage and peoples' attention. "I think Newt would have gone out on the road and received little or no attention for the events," says a House leader. "Denny isn't about to waste our time and energy on an important issue if it isn't going to help us win back home or in Washington." Hastert's gruff manner isn't sitting well with everyone, however. Some House members have complained that Hastert has too often attempted to control their every move, including travel plans overseas when the House is out of session. "It's none of his business when and where we take 'fact-finding' missions," says the leadership member, just back from "fact-finding" in London and Paris. ❄

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Islands of Anarchy



The origins of the Colorado high school massacre go back many decades. They go back to the 1960's when youth culture emerged as distinct from American culture,

which is to say a culture shared by all age groups. They go back even further to the 1920's and 1930's when loony theorists—usually from continental Europe—theorized about zoo sex, violent individuality, psychic flumiddie, all the nonsense that found its way into Nazi thought, left-wing thought, and other aberrant notions. The origins of Columbine high school's unspeakable massacre go back to the nihilism and evil of earlier centuries. Yet it is in the twentieth century that nihilism and evil found their proper marketers.

Perhaps now, in light of the grisly expression of adolescent individuality at Columbine High School, some adults will agree that high school might be a more congenial place were the major battles between teachers and students still fought over hair length and suitable dress. That struggle was lost long ago, and so now the battle is over boom boxes, cellular telephones, weapons, and God knows what else students want to bring to school. Today many a local high school is an island of anarchy in youth culture's sea of chaos.

There is no one reform that will pacify either. Not Hollywood violence, guns, lax parents, or foolish high school administrators can explain this massacre. The anger demonstrated by the murderers is an anger that is socially approved by enlightened opinion when it is displayed by polit-

ically fashionable aggrieved groups. Some Americans are supposed to be "enraged." Why not adolescents? Is it only when they kill someone that enlightened opinion expresses alarm? Even then you will find some idiot writer with an "interesting" explanation for the carnage.

One of the sensible things that we might expect to be said about such violence is that it is cowardly. It is an act of cowardice to shoot an unarmed person. But if anyone has mentioned this in public in the aftermath of the Colorado massacre I have not noticed it. To recognize cowardice one has to have a code of honor. Honor, unfortunately, is hopelessly passé. It has been replaced by feelings. The boys with the guns and the bombs *felt* angry. Now we all *feel* sad.

As I say, there is no one cause for this brutality. It has to be laid to a whole culture that goes back many years. The Clintons speak of a "culture of violence." Well, if you are going to lift a line from the Pope, do not shirk from his complete thought. John Paul II speaks of a "culture of death." The challenges and complexities of life in the moral setting of our Judeo-Christian experience are sufficient to overwhelm both cultures of violence and of death. Yet the crank thoughts and the utopian thoughts of the aforementioned loony theorists are given dominance in America.

A British observer, Hugo Gurdon, writing in London's *Daily Telegraph*, notes with arresting optimism that violence in American schools is declining. He suggests that we review the excess committed under the First Amendment. He would not limit the First Amendment but urges that Americans "should not accept any longer that freedom of speech disqualifies demands for decency."

The Pope's "culture of death" brings to mind his opposition to abortion and to capital punishment. These are grave breaches of life. Curiously, what Gurdon would call

breaches of decency are also absorbed with death and suffering. Consider the laughter over there on the "shock jock" radio show. In the *Wall Street Journal* the other day columnist Dorothy Rabinowitz tells us that Howard Stern, the "shock jock" philosopher, has been laughing it up about rape in Kosovo. "The Serbs are just having a good time," his fatuous sidekick quips. "Right," says Stern. "Those Albanian women are hot." In the same hilarious show Stern joked it up about the Holocaust. A few days before I heard some comic genius on the "Imus in the Morning" show making jokes about MSNBC interviewer John Hockenberry's reliance on a wheelchair. And then there is the idiotic Greaseman. Before he was fired that "shock jock" saw humor in the gruesome murder of a black man dragged behind a truck in Jasper, Texas.

There is not any one thing we can do to liberate aberrant youth culture from the culture of death. And to liberate the rest of America from the culture of death is an even vaster undertaking. Yet Gurdon's notion of speaking out for decency is not so difficult. There is a growing number of thoughtful Americans who recognize the cheap humbug of such frauds as the "shock

25 YEARS AGO IN The American Spectator

On the other hand, and far more common there are also madmen who find it impossible to disentangle dreams from reality—and of this kind of madness we have had alas, far too much experience. Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration to say that a good part of modern history takes place under the sign of this second kind of madness, which we familiarly call "utopianism."

—Irving Kristo
"Utopianism, Ancient and Modern"

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