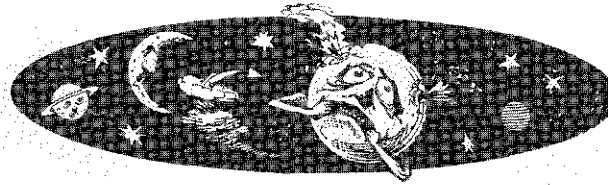


THE CONTINUING CRISIS

R. EMMETT TYRRELL, JR.



An elegant September made blusterous by Hurricane Isabel defers finally to October, and shortly thereafter 281 million Americans learned how Mr. Rush Limbaugh has been able to contemplate *Homo liberalis* for three hours a day, five days a week, over 15 years. He has been taking pain killers! Well, of course, some sort of coping mechanism was requisite. Just listening to Mr. Al Franken, the gruesome comic manqué, as he attempts light-heartedness is painful enough. And then there is Mr. Alan Dershowitz, today's version of Frankfurter & Brandeis, who in September was charged with plagiarism by one Professor Norman G. Finkelstein. And there are all the other ghastly poseurs whom Mr. Limbaugh treats with generosity and polite laughter every day. Confronted with such toil I too would reach for relief, though it might come in liquid form, bottled in Scotland or Kentucky. Mr. Limbaugh has promised to return to radio in 30 days free of his jinns, but for the liberals no such therapy is available. What can Mr. Limbaugh do about that?

The Democratic presidential race lost one candidate, Senator Bob (Robert) Graham, and gained two, Congressman Dennis (Denny) Kucinich and General Wesley (Woos) Clark, who decided that after years of voting Republican and being registered Independent he is after all a Democrat. Within two weeks he proved it. By then he had been caught lying about his stand on the Iraq war, lying about conversations with presidential adviser Mr. Karl (Karl) Rove, and lying about his party affiliation. If those were not sufficient proofs of his Democratic bona fides he got himself caught violating federal election laws. Is it only coincidence that he declared his candidacy in Little Rock, Arkansas? Meanwhile the Ba'athist wing of the Democratic Party continued to politicize the Iraq war, calling for an Independent Counsel to investigate the

White House's treatment of former Ambassador Joseph C. Wilson IV, winner in early October of the "Truth-Telling Award," sponsored, curiously enough, by *The Nation* magazine and gift shoppe.

Apparently that drunk driver arrested in Baarn, Holland, claiming to be the Pope was not the ailing 83-year-old Pontiff but rather a local amateur theologist who thought there existed such a thing as "spiritual immunity." The Bush administration alarmed some civil libertarians in September by announcing a "historical" crackdown on pornography, particularly that involving bestiality, sexual violence, and the misuse of human excrement, thus raising the question, what precisely is the proper use of human excrement? Can it be used in works of modern art as the African painter Mr. Chris Ofili has done with elephant droppings that won him the UK's 1998 Turner Prize? Or is it better used in the heating of those environment-friendly homes developed by Greens in California? According to the *New York Sun*, deputy assistant attorney general Mr. John Malcolm claimed in an interview that "the Justice Department is 'going back' to enforcing federal obscenity laws that were largely ignored under the Clinton Administration," which is somewhat surprising for the "misuse of human excrement" could violate various environmental statutes that supposedly were of the utmost importance to the Clintons.

The invaluable South China Morning Post reports a development portending a breakthrough in those anger-management programs now so popular with American progressives. According to the *Post*, a 28-year-old Chinese man in Chengdu, China, is presenting himself as a human punching bag to angry clients, mostly at bars and discos. The resilient young man, who remains imperturbable even to kicks and rude language, charges about \$7 per two-

minute session or until he passes out. Whether he has plans to ply his trade in America is not clear, but doubtless we all have recommendations for persons we would like to see apprenticed to him. The cinematic genius, Mr. Michael Moore, would be perfect, as would the aforementioned Mr. Franken, though from the ugly lumpiness of Mr. Franken's face it appears he may already have served as a professional punching bag.

Mr. Tucker Carlson is back in the news. Mr. Carlson, the troubled CNN mini-con known to discerning viewers of his moribund TV show "Crossfire" as "Mr. Happy Bottom," has accused Fox News of posting his telephone number on its website, thus provoking a deluge of "obscene telephone calls" to his wife. Why callers would speak lewdly to Mrs. Carlson, her husband has not explained. The Fox News Web site published no pictures of his wife, and if she were an obedient wife she would not be taking such calls. Fox was responding to Mr. Carlson's impetuous announcement of Fox's Capitol Hill telephone number during a "Crossfire" discussion of atrocities committed by telemarketers. Forced by Fox to apologize lest Fox continue to post his unpublished number and tempt his wife, the young man then whimpered to columnist Mr. Howard Kurtz, "They're a mean, sick group of people. Don't harass my wife and kids. Even the Mafia doesn't do that." Mr. Carlson, whose show has now been bumped up to compete with after-school shows on weekdays, did not answer our telephoned requests that he explain his connections with the Mafia. Al-Jazeera, the former Arab aerobics studio that has been transformed into one of the most colorful television stations in the Arab world, broadcast a video allegedly showing the Rev. Osama bin Laden walking with another homeless person in an unidentified boondocks. The Rev. bin Laden has reportedly been in poor health in recent years and did appear to be in need of a dose of Imodium, assuming the refreshment is not *malum prohibi-*

tum in the sacred leaves of the Koran. In related news Miss Sarah Percival, a beauty therapist on Channel 4's "The Salon" in the UK, set a world record in bikini waxing.

Mr. Robert Torricelli, the disgraced former senator from New Jersey who in 1998 demanded a federal investigation of this magazine of the arts before being forced out of the Senate for corruption, was charged with leaving the scene of an automobile accident. With characteristic noblesse oblige he is claiming that while he was in the car at the time of the accident, he was not driving it; his ex-wife was. In Japan, Mrs. Kamato Hongo, who is credited with

being the world's oldest person at 116, remained awake during her birthday party while in Argentina Mr. Carlos Gonzales Valencia, 94, died at his own wake. Mrs. Hongo's custom is to sleep two days at a time and remain awake the following two days. Mr. Gonzales has in recent years been subdued; though apparently when taken from the clinic, where he was under treatment, to the funeral home he was not dead. His daughter, who noticed his languorous pulse at the wake, is suing.

In the Middle East the militant Islamofascist Hamas attempted a new tactic by sending suicide bombers to attack Israeli soldiers as well as civilians. In response Israeli Prime Minister Ariel

Sharon's cabinet made the decision to "remove" PLO leader Yasser Arafat, though the details of his removal were not made public. Early in October, however, it was reported that Mr. Arafat's health was in decline, and he has not been seen jogging or riding his unicycle near his compound for some time. Death claimed the life of country singer, Mr. Johnny Cash and of Mr. Otto Gunsche, who in 1945 with another SS officer burned the bodies of Adolf Hitler and Eva Braun, before being captured by the Red Army and imprisoned for 12 years. After his release he lived quietly in West Germany, singing songs and collecting dust. He was cremated. ☼

Wesley Clark
decided that
after years of
voting
Republican
and being
registered
Independent
he is after all a
Democrat.

The Men Who Knew Too Little

For more than a decade, the CIA has been consistently wrong on Iraq—big time.

BY LAURIE MYLROIE

I

N 1991, AS THE UNITED STATES PREPARED FOR WAR, the CIA sought to keep the structure of Iraq's Ba'athist regime intact, while removing Saddam through a coup. This was fully supported by the U.S. government's Arabists in the State Department and elsewhere. As Sandra Charles, deputy to Richard Haass, responsible for the Middle East at the White House, affirmed, "Our policy is to get rid of Saddam Hussein, not remove his regime." Twelve years later, as the United States prepared for a second war with Iraq, the CIA still sought to lop off the top of the regime, relying on the Iraqi bureaucracies remaining intact to form the core of the post-war government. No need for any of the millions of Iraqis in exile. More than any other U.S. government agency, the CIA is responsible for the lack of post-war planning, which bedevils the U.S. position in Iraq today.

Following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the CIA, working with Saudi intelligence, focused on a group of ex-Ba'athists, who claimed they could launch a successful coup against Saddam. These men had all once worked with the dictator, but had