

ture of war. One is that wars will soon cease. Bierce knew that this is an age-old fantasy: "The dream of a time when the nation shall war no more is a pleasant dream and an ancient." The second is that the dreadfulness of vast arrays of the most deadly and advanced weaponry will deter men from using them. Nonsense, wrote Bierce. "Men's sense of their power to make [war] dreadful is precisely the thing that most encourages them to wage it."

Men do not construct expensive machinery, taxing themselves poor to keep it in working order, without ultimately setting it going. The more of its income a nation has to spend in preparation for war, the more certainly it will go to war. Its means of defense are a means of aggression, and the stronger it feels itself to strike for its altars and its fires, the more spirited becomes its desire to go across the border to upset the altars and extinguish the fires of its neighbors.

The carnage of World War I fully vindicated Bierce's prescient pessimism, as did Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's petulant rebuke of Gen. Colin Powell's objection to intervening militarily in the Bosnian civil war—"What's the point of having this superb military that you're always talking about if we can't use it?" Indeed. And what's the point of studying the Civil War without reading Bierce?

H.A. Scott Trask has a Ph.D. in American history, is finishing a political study of antebellum political economist Condé Raguette of Philadelphia, and is writing a book on the Northern antiwar movement during the War Between the States.

LIBERAL ARTS

NOW THAT YOU'VE RECORDED A NEW GOSPEL ALBUM . . .

"CCM Magazine: Our staff is dying to know, what exactly does it mean to you to be 'Bootylicious'?"
"Williams: . . . [T]hat song was about high self esteem. . . . I guess cause it had the word 'booty' in it, that's what kind of struck people."
—from a November 2002 interview with *Destiny's Child's* Michelle Williams in Contemporary Christian Music magazine

Taking Up the Cross

by Thomas Fleming

What Were the Crusades?

by Jonathan Riley-Smith
San Francisco: Ignatius Press;
128 pp., \$11.95

The Crusades are an increasingly controversial topic of historical debate. As much as slavery, the Civil War, and the *conquistadores*, Western Europe's attempt to recover the Holy Land has been denounced by the anti-Christian left as a quintessential expression of Western man's vileness. There are many good narrative accounts of the Crusades and many monographs that take up particular aspects—and no end of polemics. Jonathan Riley-Smith's slim volume, however, is among the rarest of books: a fair-minded attempt to judge the Crusaders by their own moral standards.

Riley-Smith's discussions of what a Crusade was, who the Crusaders were, and by what authority a knight was justified in taking up the Cross are essential tools to help modern men and women understand a phenomenon that seems as inexplicable to us as the lemmings' march to the sea. The chapter "A Just Cause" is urgently needed today, for the light it sheds on both the motives of the Crusaders and the morality of the next Western expedition to the Middle East.

The medieval theory of a just war, although it is similar in many respects to later Catholic teachings, was able to embrace not only wars of defense but wars of legitimate vengeance. While some writers (including Bernard of Clairvaux and Pope Urban II) gave the impression that any war against pagans was justified, this was far from being the consensus. Indeed, even Saint Bernard, in advocating a war without truce against the Muslims, believed that "the pagans directly threatened Christendom and it was only because there was no alternative to the use of physical force that they must be crushed if they would not be converted."

In clinging to the superstition that all religions are more or less the same, we prefer to forget the terrible nightmare that the Muslim conquest inflicted upon the Christians and Jews of the Middle East, and, if we do remember, it is only to

condemn the eccentricities of the Fatimid Caliph who destroyed the Church of the Holy Sepulchre or to deplore the depredations of the Seljuk Turks. However, Muslim terrorism against Christians preceded their conquest of Syria and Palestine and has lasted down to the present. As Ba'at Yeor has shown, terrorism was an essential tool of conquest: A demoralized Christian population would more easily accept any terms offered by the Muslim conquerors. It is true that, after the initial bloodbath, Muslim rulers found it in their interest to preserve a tax base of nonbelievers, who were degraded to a legal position far lower and more precarious than that of a freedman in Boston in 1860. Until the arrival of the Turks, however, Muslim authorities did tolerate Christian communities and did not actively discourage European pilgrims who came, as tourists always do, to spend ready money in the local economy. It was the Seljuk Turks' renewed persecution of Christians and their militant crackdown on pilgrims that induced the Byzantine emperor (very foolishly, it would appear in hindsight) to appeal to Western Christians for help.

As time went on, Europeans took up the Cross for a variety of motives, not all of them honorable, and the longer they stayed in the Middle East, the more the Crusaders began to resemble their pagan enemies. However, as this careful and patient examination reveals, the stated purpose of the Crusades was the perfectly legitimate desire to protect Christians in the East, to reopen Christian shrines to pilgrimages, and to recover control over Christian holy places that were being desecrated by irresponsible Muslim rulers whose only title to the land was a not-so-distant conquest. Emperor John Tzimiskes had successfully reasserted Byzantine rule (albeit temporarily) over Palestine in the late tenth century. The First Crusade was preached in 1095.

Carefully researched, brilliantly argued, and clearly written, *What Were the Crusades?* is a necessary corrective to the anti-Christian propaganda that is passed off as scholarship, but it also reminds us of a time when the fierce knights of France, bolder than the men who rode with Bedford Forrest, insisted on applying Christian moral standards to their invasion of the Middle East.

Thomas Fleming is the author of Montenegro: The Divided Land (Chronicles Press).

by Samuel Francis

The Strange Death of the Yellow Dog

Perusing the conservative press in the days after the Republican victories in the November 2002 elections was like watching the triumph scenes in various sword-and-sandal movies of the 1950's and 60's, with the reader almost expecting to see outgoing Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle dragged in chains through the streets of Washington. The Stupid Party is not used to winning, and, when it does, it quickly reveals that it lacks the grace and modesty that natural winners always display. Reports in conservative journals with headlines like "Bush Delivers Knock-out Punch," "Bush's Winning Hand," and "Bush's Big Win" chortled happily over the news that the slowest kid on the team had finally hit a home run. The President himself and his cronies prepared to make full use of their victory to wage war against every country that Richard Perle dislikes, shovel out corporate welfare to the appropriate managerial mammoths, and finish the delicate but urgent mission of constructing a complete police state in the name of the American Creed. Since the Democrats supported most of the same policies, it made little difference which party won the elections.

Nevertheless, the professional apologists for the Republicans leapt at the opportunity to rehearse the standard propaganda line as to how the party had done it. Of course, there was the expected claim that the vast majority of Americans supported the President in his desire to rid the globe of terrorism and tyranny, but there was also the subtheme that the Republicans were able to win because George W. Bush had succeeded in constructing a new, multiracial coalition that was bleeding disgruntled minorities from the Democrats and transfusing them into sclerotic GOP arteries. Blacks, you see, were conspicuous by their absence from the polls last November, and the Democrats cannot win much of anything without the black vote. As for Hispanics, the propagandists repeated exactly what the Republican National Committee demanded they say, which is that Hispanics are turning Republican.

Thus, reporter Ellen Sorokin, in the *Washington Times*, wrote only one day after the vote that "Hispanic voters were a

driving force behind the Republicans' historic win of both chambers of Congress, party officials and political analysts said yesterday." The first official she quoted was Tom Davis, chairman of the RNC, who avowed that "Their base wasn't as aroused as our base." Miss Sorokin also went on to list several races in which the Hispanic vote had supposedly gone to the Republicans and had proved decisive to their victories.

Thus, the President's brother, Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, was reported as having won reelection "with more than 60 percent of the Latino vote"; New York's Gov. George Pataki, with "nearly 50 percent"; and Texas Gov. Rick Perry, with "more than one-third of the Latino vote."

The claim that the Hispanic vote can be won by Republicans is not a new one, of course. It first surfaced in the mid-1990's when the pro-immigration lobby began to grasp that the success of such grassroots immigration-restriction measures as California's Proposition 187 was threatening their endless supply of cheap labor, cheap nannies, and exotic restaurants. If only those nasty nativists like Pat Buchanan who support restricting immigration would shut up, they argued, the Republicans might actually win the Hispanic vote, but any mention of restricting immigration only alienates and offends the growing Hispanic electorate.

The claim was dubious on its face, since Hispanics had always voted for the Democrats, with the exception of the anticommunist and largely white Cuban community in Florida. Moreover, almost all polls show that Hispanics support restricting immigration by nearly as large a majority as non-Hispanics, and Proposition 187 itself won no less than a third of the Hispanic vote. California Gov. Pete Wilson, a liberal Republican who was almost universally regarded as politically defunct in 1994, wrapped himself in Proposition 187 and won reelection with 55 percent of the vote, as did five new Republican congressmen from California the same year. Yet the Open Borders lobby has never ceased regurgitating the Big Lie that Proposition 187 was a disaster for Republicans.

George W. Bush was supposed to re-



verse that "disaster," since he had won "nearly a majority" (or sometimes, "more than a majority") of Hispanic voters in Texas in 1998 when he ran for reelection as governor. In fact, he won probably less than 40 percent of the state's Hispanic vote in 1998 and even less than that nationally in the 2000 presidential election, in which Al Gore carried the Hispanic vote by over 65 percent.

The Republican obsession with winning Hispanics led the party not only to reject immigration control, probably the strongest and most popular issue it had in the last decade, but to propose statehood for Puerto Rico and pander shamelessly to Hispanics on every occasion. Just last year alone, as Miss Sorokin also reported,

More than \$9 million was spent by gubernatorial, Senate, and House candidates on nearly 14,000 Spanish-language television spots, setting a nationwide record for non-presidential election years and numerous statewide records.

This obsession was central to a new electoral strategy, replacing the old "Southern strategy," which sought the votes of Southern and working-class whites. Boasting to the *Washington Post* in 2000 of the glories that the new strategy promised, Ralph Reed, the former executive director of the Christian Coalition and now a Republican political consultant, said,

This is a very different party from the party that sits down on Labor Day and cedes the black vote and cedes the Hispanic vote, and tries to drive its percentage of the white vote over 70 percent to win an election.

Yet the truth, though unpleasant for