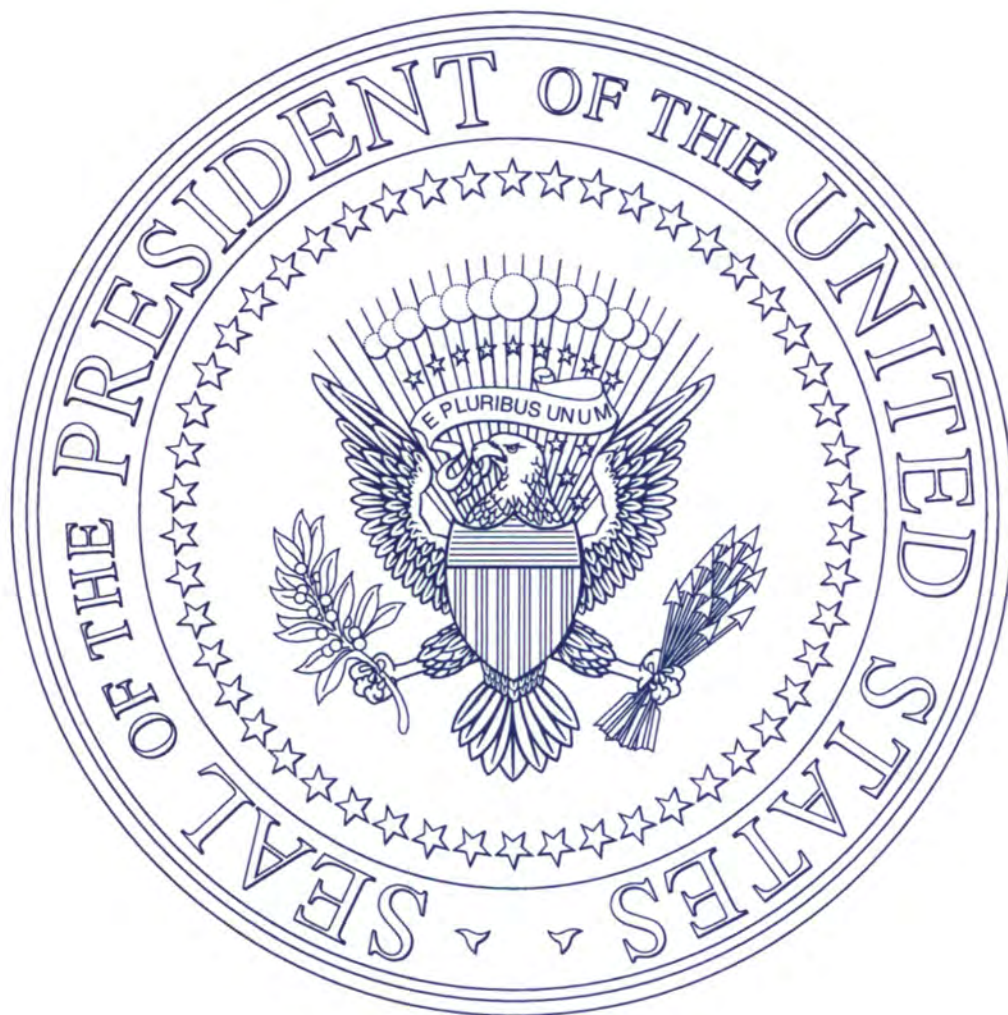

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CLINTON ADMINISTRATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

JANUARY 1995

Work in
Progress

file for accomplishment

GEORGIE ANNE GEYER

Perhaps the Beijing conference on emancipated women is not the time to say this, but a woman has a right to change her mind. And this first week of the new work year, I have changed mine on a few hot-button issues and individuals:

- First, Hillary Rodham Clinton. Her performance in Beijing was little less than spectacular, proving, at least to me, that it is in this special inspirational venue, on issues she feels strongly about, that she finds a niche that no one else in the world can possibly fill.

When she spoke forcefully before that "confused" (to put it kindly) U.N. world conference — and spoke about women's rights being human rights — she was acting exactly as an American first lady should act. (Then when she sloshed through the rain and through those miserable, pushing, insufferable Chinese police to give courage to the poor NGO women isolated out there in Huairou, which means "Welcome to the Barbarians," she deserved a Purple Heart!)

Why was this so right for Mrs. Clinton? Because she was not meddling and manipulating, hiding her actions, as she did in the unfortunate health care disaster; she was acting as a true spokeswoman for the important principles of the modern world. Let's hope for more of this — and far less of the other!

- Then there is poor Sen. Bob Packwood. Now, as an early femi-

Revised visions of the passing scene



Hillary Clinton

Illustration by Elaine Chamberlain/ Special to the Washington Times

nist, I bear not the slightest sympathy for sexual harassers. But Bob Packwood? A woman should really be ashamed of her womanhood — she should skulk out of the room and hide in some dark bar — if she can't deal with the likes of Bob Packwood!

All indicators are that Mr. Packwood was a fine legislator, but, in the heat of his ridiculous advances and sloppy kisses, he was just a little skinny bothersome guy with pop eyes whom any self-respecting woman could knock over with the slightest brush of her knuckles. For goodness sakes, being apparently alcoholic in those days, he says he doesn't even remember these pitiful attempts to "conquer" all those women.

Probably it is because I am one of those girls from the South Side of Chicago, but our mothers taught us to take care of little guys like that right on the spot. They were, frankly, unworthy of too much of our time or attention, much less worth nursing grievances about for years.

- Next, focus for a moment on the beautiful sight of handsome Baltimore Orioles' shortstop Cal Ripken playing his 2,131st consecutive game and breaking Lou Gehrig's extraordinary record of 1939. Cheers that would not abate, cur-

tain call after curtain call, fireworks, a joy that would not stop as Ripken lapped around the Baltimore stadium. "An all-star gala as much as a baseball game," The Washington Post called it.

Until recently I blamed the cynical purveyors of popular culture for all the pornography, insipid television shows and seemingly endless trash that has become our popular culture. But now I blame us. Wednesday night in the Baltimore stadium shows what a healthy, joyous face we can put forward as a people when we choose to honor a healthy, joyous man and not all the sick "victims" that we have allowed to so catch our attention.

It is when we, as a people, won't honor the trash — when we insist instead on honoring the Ripkens who are all around us — that our present ugly cultural morass will change.

- Finally, did anyone notice one of the most fascinating stories of the first week of September? The visit of Panamanian President Ernesto Perez Balladares to see President Clinton?

You remember the Panama Canal treaties of 1977? Surely you recall that all American troops are to be withdrawn from Panama and all bases given to Panama by Dec.

31, 1999? (Perhaps you even know that Mr. Perez Balladares used to belong to the party of Manuel Noriega and thus could be expected to be an extremist super-nationalist.)

"Progressive" thinkers in the 1970s and even the '80s were so sure that we should leave the canal to the benighted Panamanians. (Frankly, I was not so sure, but in time I bowed to my progressive friends and instincts.)

Well now, the most interesting — and important — issue here is that 70 percent of Panamanians want the United States to keep both soldiers and bases there. It's partly security, partly drugs, partly the \$500 million we spend every year.

What does that say about changes in perceptions and in reality? It says that we are already in a wholly new foreign policy era — that those shibboleths that asserted every country has the right to total independence, without any dependence on others, are frauds. It says to me it is time we not only in small part "renegotiated," as Mr. Clinton and Mr. Perez Balladares are going to do, but that, more important, we need to drop all the ideological cant and rethink rationally what really best serves the majority of the peoples of the world.

Whew! Those are about all the changes I can stand for one September.

Georgie Anne Geyer is a nationally syndicated columnist.



CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Lahore

*My
Accomplishments*

January 10, 1996

Ms. Melanne Verveer
Office of the First Lady
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Ms. Verveer:

I recently received the enclosed letter addressed to Mrs. Clinton from a citizen of Burki, the village Mrs. Clinton visited on the outskirts of Lahore.

I have already sent a brief letter of thanks for this kind message.

Sincerely,

Eric D. Tunis
Eric D. Tunis
Consul General

1 Enclosure
Ltr dtd 12/20/95