

file Blair



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

2 June 1997

Melanne Verveer
Chief of Staff to the First Lady
The White House
Washington DC
USA

Dear Melanne,

I just wanted to write and say how much we enjoyed meeting you and Hillary Clinton last week. We were all very impressed by Hillary and relieved to meet someone who has lived in the spotlight for five years, has remained human and retains a sense of humour!

It also meant a lot to Cherie to find someone else with whom she can share these extremely rare experiences and I know she is writing personally to Hillary as well. She really appreciated the good advice you both gave and you will be pleased to hear that we are already looking at a volunteer/intern programme to help us with the paper mountain.

I have now seen a draft outline for Denver and it looks as though they may get a chance to spend time together again. Cherie is really looking forward to that and I hope we will get the chance to have a drink too.

Best wishes

Fiona

FIONA MILLAR
Assistant to Cherie Booth QC

file Br.

WASHINGTON

GOP continues the push for independent counsel

Republicans renewed their call Sunday for Attorney General Janet Reno to seek an independent counsel to investigate Democratic fund-raising abuses.

Senate Judiciary Chairman Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, told Fox News that fund-raising calls by President Clinton and Vice President Gore from their White House offices are "not the important issue," but that an outside counsel needs to look into whether there was foreign influence in the presidential election and whether the Clinton administration violated campaign laws and peddled influence for campaign donations.

Reno must decide by Tuesday whether to seek an independent counsel on the phone calls issue, and on an accusation that then-Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary sought a \$25,000 charitable contribution in exchange for a meeting with Chinese businessmen.

A Justice Department task force reportedly is recommending against a special counsel. Reno was reviewing the investigations Sunday and had not reached any decisions, a spokesman said. Also Sunday:

► *Time* says FBI Director Louis Freeh fears that ending the phone calls probe will hurt agents' ability to pursue more serious issues about Clinton-Gore fund-raising, and that the basic question of whether there was an overarching scandal to violate campaign laws might go unresolved.

► Gore told *The New Yorker* he made "a very big mistake" in holding a press conference last March to defend his fund-raising phone calls. "I wanted to make a clean breast of it and tell everything I did, and why, even at the risk of making some mistakes," Gore said.

— Gary Fields



Hatch: More than fund-raising calls

'HERITAGE' RIVERS: The Rio Grande in southern New Mexico won't be one of the first 10 "American Heritage" rivers to be designated next year for environmental projects and economic development. Rep. Joe Skeen, R-N.M., said the Council on Environmental Quality, which advises President Clinton, told him the river won't be named to the project over his objections. Skeen objects because he says designating the Rio Grande as a heritage river could effect water rights, which are vital to agriculture. Other opponents say the rivers initiative, which Clinton unveiled last year, is another federal intrusion into private property rights. But Kevin Bixby of the Southwest Environmental Center in Las Cruces, N.M., says the Rio Grande was a good candidate for the voluntary program. "It's hard to imagine a river with more combined cultural, historical, ecological and economic importance in the country," Bixby says. "It is one of the longest rivers in the country. It was the focal point of human habitation in the Southwest."

U.S.-BRITISH POLITICS: Hillary Rodham Clinton, in England last month, had a private meeting with Prime Minister Tony Blair and his advisers to discuss ways to develop policies that are a model for other center-left parties around the world, *Time* reports. It said a central assumption was that both the Democratic Party and the Labor Party must shed their image of big-spending liberalism. Among those with Clinton at the meeting at Chequers, the prime minister's country retreat, were HUD Secretary Andrew Cuomo, budget director Franklin Raines and Democratic Leadership Council President Al From.

VISA DISPUTE: Sen. Alfonse D'Amato, R-N.Y., is trying to help 28 Polish flight attendants who were granted U.S. visas but now have been ordered deported. The Immigration and Naturalization Service issued the visas at the request of Delta Air Lines, which closed its Warsaw office last summer. Several weeks ago, INS said the visas were a mistake, and the workers had until Dec. 5 to leave or be deported. "You cannot simply open the door to people, induce them to give up everything abroad, come here, and then say, 'No, we made a mistake,'" D'Amato says.

U.S.-AFRICA TIES: Civil rights leader Jesse Jackson is due in Nairobi today, the first stop on his first mission since President Clinton named him special envoy for encouraging democracy in Africa. "The United States and Africa are entering a new era," Jackson said on the eve of his departure for Kenya and Zambia, where he will meet with government officials, opposition leaders and religious figures. For the United States, Jackson said, increased trade "represents economic growth and expansion. For Africa, it represents development." He said he will emphasize that "democracy, human rights and a free press are the predicates" to more U.S. trade and investment.



Jackson: On a mission for Clinton

ALSO . . .

► **RADIO TALKS:** President Clinton used his Saturday radio address to push for expansion of his AmeriCorps national service program for another five years. More than 100,000 have enrolled in the program, which rewards volunteers with a \$4,725 grant for education. Republicans, in their address by Sen. John Chafee of Rhode Island, urged people to adopt abused or neglected children.

► **CLINTON HOLIDAY:** President Clinton, with his wife and daughter, spent Thanksgiving at Camp David, the presidential retreat in the Maryland mountains. He played golf Saturday for the third day in a row.

Census will try 'sampling' next year

The Census Bureau is moving ahead with plans for three trial runs next year, but there's still uncertainty over what methods Congress will allow. At stake is the once-in-a-decade count that will determine how many members of Congress and federal funds are apportioned to each state.



Miller: Easy to lie with statistics

Republicans agreed to allow continued plans to use statistical estimates known as "sampling" in an April test run in Sacramento. But traditional methods of direct counting must be used in a trial in Columbia, S.C. The trial run of sampling at the Menominee Indian Reservation in Wisconsin will go off as planned.

Proponents of sampling to estimate the number and characteristics of people who might be missed say the methods are valid and will make for a more accurate count. Opponents say the Constitution requires an actual headcount, and the Clinton administration can't be trusted not to manipulate estimates to aid Democrats.

Rep. Dan Miller, R-Fla., chairman of a new House subcommittee overseeing the Census, plans hearings early next year on whether the oversight board can ensure that sampling will be impartial. Miller holds a doctoral degree with a minor in statistics. He told fellow lawmakers that it is easy to lie with statistics.

Written by Paul Leavitt with staff and wire reports

Veterans groups cool to West's VA nomination

By Norm Brewer
Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — Army Secretary Togo West is getting a cool reception from veterans groups over his expected nomination as secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Some veterans are put off by the Army being the lead agency on chemical weapons, helping shape Pentagon denials, eventually recanted, that troops in the Persian Gulf War were exposed to them.

"We believe it is a conflict of interest to have a former official of the Defense Department head the VA," says Erica Lundholm of the California Association of Persian Gulf Veterans. "The Pentagon has not honestly investigated problems of the Gulf War."

Other veterans have questioned West's lack of experience on veterans issues.

"Veterans I've talked to are not totally disappointed," says George Duggins, president of Vietnam Veterans of America. "There are others out there who probably could do a better job... but it's the president's choice."

West, who declined to be interviewed, has been the odds-on favorite for the VA job. He would be the third black member of President Clinton's Cabinet.

Four groups — Disabled American Veterans, AMVETS, Paralyzed Veterans of America and Veterans of Foreign Wars — sent Clinton a letter in November that set out qualities for the post: wartime veteran with a service-connected disability, and a record as an advocate for veterans. Jesse Brown, who resigned as VA secretary, fit that outline. West, 55, doesn't.

West was general counsel to the Navy and assistant to the Defense secretary's office from 1977 to 1980, when he joined a law firm and lobbied for defense clients. Clinton named him Army secretary in 1993.

Since then, he has approved 58 waivers for burial in Arlington National Cemetery. When the conservative magazine *Insight* reported that the waivers were linked to political contributions to Democrats, a controversy erupted. After three days of accusations, the Pentagon released the names of people granted waivers. Scrutiny of the list found no evidence of wrongdoing.

But to some, the matter calls his judgment into question. Unlike the standards for who qualifies for burial at Arlington — active-duty retirees, and troops killed in action or highly decorated — there are no guidelines for granting waivers.

Roland Charles, a Navy veteran, was not decorated highly enough for burial at Arlington. He could have been buried in the same plot there as his parents, but tree roots were in the way. West at first denied the waiver. But Charles' son, Robert, a Republican aide on a defense subcommittee, appealed to Defense Secretary William Cohen. West yielded.

Chuck Jackson, president of the Non-Commissioned Officers Association, says the controversy raises a question of how vigorously West would protect veterans' medical, educational and disability benefits. The question is crucial at a time when the VA is reorganizing.

Chris Kornkven, president of the National Gulf War Resource Center, says his group probably will oppose West's nomination, in part because of the Army's treatment of disabled soldiers. "We continue to see veterans being discharged... with little or no disability compensation," he says.

David Gorman of Disabled American Veterans says, "I see a danger in going from a Pentagon hat to a VA hat."



West: Army's influence questioned

Congress is getting a little more civil, but has a ways to go

By Jennifer Loven
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — When rain forced the cancellation of the White House's fall picnic with Congress, House Speaker Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., proposed a Plan B. Why not fill his spacious Capitol offices with food and drink and invite all his colleagues and their families?

Dozens of Republicans, of course, responded to their leader's rare invitation. But a sizable number of Democrats showed up as well. One said it was the first time he'd shaken the speaker's hand. Some even lined up to have a photo taken with the man they'd been vilifying as their party's greatest enemy. The impromptu gathering is one of several small signs that a March retreat for House members in Hershey, Pa., may be paying some dividends. Members who have been campaigning for more civility, and who organized that retreat, say the House just might be getting less unpleasant.

"We still have a long way to go in terms of trying to build trust and trying to build bipartisan relationships," says Rep. Ray LaHood, R-Ill. "But I do think over a period of time, we really do have the potential to bring a level of civility and bipartisanship people will really be proud of."

Other evidence of progress on the civility front, according to observers: Fewer floor speeches that include nasty attacks on other lawmakers, families that met at Hershey have had dinners together, and Gingrich and Minority Leader Dick Gephardt have had meetings that, though still infrequent, aren't as scarce as in previous years.

Even the perennial, contentious debate over funding for the National Endowment for the Arts, though no less intense this fall, didn't descend into the name-calling and other boorish behavior of the past.

To be sure, there are other signs that relations remain as discourteous as ever.

Former GOP congressman Bob Dornan of California, while on the floor in September during discussion of his charges that Democratic Rep. Loretta Sanchez defeated him last November with the help of illegal voting by noncitizens, called Rep. Robert Menendez, D-N.J., a liar and a coward.

And just a month after the Hershey conference, House Republican Whip Tom DeLay of Texas shoved Rep. David Obey, D-Wis., and called him an obscene name. The issue: Obey's accusation that the GOP was giving lobbyists too much access. Aides later said DeLay was provoked by obscenities from Obey.

The civility campaign will continue.

"Hershey and our work since then were not about ending arguments, but about having them in a mutually respectful way," says Rep. David Skaggs, D-Colo., the group's leader, who is retiring after next year.

The group will continue its efforts when Congress reconvenes in January, by scheduling bipartisan family gatherings and encouraging more Gephardt-Gingrich meetings. It also would like to institute a sort of political exchange program where leaders visit the opposite caucus.

And there will be another Hershey-like retreat in 1999, with hopes for an even bigger turnout than the 200 of the 435 House members who attended this year.



Gingrich: Why not have a party?



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

file-England

From the Office of Cherie Booth QC

11 February 1998

The Hon Melanne Verveer
Chief of Staff
First Lady's office
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington DC 20500

Dear Melanne,

It was so good to see you again in Washington last week. It was a wonderful trip and I think we all came down to earth with a huge bump when we landed at Heathrow. Cherie and I were deeply impressed by your staff, their commitment to the President and Mrs Clinton and the ease and grace with which everything was organised. I wanted to thank you for that.

Cherie spoke for most of the women we know in this country when she paid her tribute to Hillary. Her strength of character, dignity and huge achievements are a real inspiration to us all. What makes her even more special is that she combines them with a great sense of humour and an ability to make everyone around her feel included. One of the high spots of organising the spouses programme for G8 will be the opportunity to meet her again. I hope you will pass on my best wishes to her and thank her as well for a wonderful two days.

Look forward to seeing you in Birmingham.

Until then, lots of love

FIONA MILLAR



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

*file Britain
Children's event*

From the Office of Cherie Booth QC

3 March 1999

BY FAX

Melanne Verveer
Chief of Staff
Office of the First Lady
The White House

Dear Melanne,

How are things at your end? Our recce team is just out in Chicago and Washington at the moment and we are all looking forward to seeing you at the NATO Summit.

I have just one more request on the "Hearing Children's Voices" conference, which is self-explanatory if you read the enclosed letter. The Express is sponsoring the conference and wants to run something exclusive on the day.

Would it be possible for them to use a précis of Hillary's speech, or a short article based on it?

Maybe Marsha could give me a ring to discuss this, or contact Rosie Boycott directly.

Thanks again for all your help with this.

*sh of line
Fiona*
FIONA MILLAR

THE EXPRESS

Ludgate House 245 Blackfriars Road London SE1 9UX
0171 928 8000

Direct Line:

Fiona Miller
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A2AA

1 March 1999

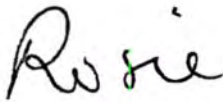
Dear Fiona,

Firstly, I just wanted to stress once again how delighted I am that The Express is sponsoring Hearing Children's Voices. It is a fantastic project and it is a great pleasure to be involved.

As we discussed in our meeting, our plan editorially is to run features in the week commencing May 10th. I am keen to start the series with a piece written by Cherie Booth and our focus will then move onto case studies highlighting the plight of children forced to endure the judicial system. On the day of the conference itself, I would like to publish something from Hilary Clinton and the most straightforward solution would seem to be to use a précis of her speech. I would therefore be extremely grateful if you would pass this request onto Mrs Clinton's office at The White House so that we can establish if this will be possible.

If you need anything further, please let me know. Otherwise, I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

With best wishes,



Rosie Boycott
Editor, The Express



File
UK

From Baroness Blackstone

Please reply to:

Birkbeck College
Malet Street
London WC1E 7HX
UK

1 March 1994

Ms Melanne Verveer
Deputy Chief of Staff to Mrs Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington DC 20500
USA

Dear Melanne,

Thank you so much for your letter of 22 February. I was delighted to learn that President and Mrs Clinton can come to the ballet on 6 April, and very much look forward to meeting them.

Yes, it would be lovely to get together. I am arriving in Washington on the evening of Friday, 1 April. I am staying with Phil and Hannah Kaiser, whose number is 202 667 6095. I am reasonably free and will be staying until the afternoon of 7 April. As I don't seem to have a phone number for you, perhaps you could either give me a ring after I arrive or, alternatively, drop me a line before I leave, suggesting a time when we could get together.

Looking forward to seeing you,

Yours,

Tessa

for Great Britain



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Head of the Prime Minister's Policy Unit

2 June 1999

Mr Melanin,

Sorry not to see you at White Oak
over the weekend. But is just to
say that your box was in
spending form. She dropped the
card into the presentation!

You are probably blase about
hearing this ...

Hope you are OK.

Yours,

David M.